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HANSARD'S
PARLIAMENTARY
DEBATES:

Third Series;

COMMENCING WITH THE ACCESSION OF
WILLIAM IV.

2° VICTORIÆ, 1839.

VOL. XLVI.

COMPRISING THE PERIOD FROM
THE SEVENTH DAY OF MARCH,
TO
THE TWELFTH DAY OF APRIL, 1839.

Second Volume of the Session.

LONDON:

THOMAS CURSON HANSARD, PATERNOSTER ROW;
AND BALDWIN AND CRADOCK; BOOKER AND DOLMAN; LONGMAN AND CO.;
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J. BIGG; J. BOOTH.

1839.

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HANSARD'S

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES,

DURING THE *SECOND SESSION* OF THE *THIRTEENTH PARLIAMENT* OF THE UNITED KINGDOM OF *GREAT BRITAIN* AND *IRELAND*, APPOINTED TO MEET AT WESTMINSTER, 5TH FEBRUARY, 1839, IN THE SECOND YEAR OF THE REIGN OF HER MAJESTY

QUEEN VICTORIA.

SECOND VOLUME OF THE SESSION.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Thursday, March 7, 1839.

MINUTES.] Petitions presented. By Lord SONDES, from some place, against the existing Beer Laws.—By the Earl of ABERDEEN, from different parts of Scotland, for Church Extension.—By Lord KINNOUL, from places in Perthshire, to the same effect.—By Lord REDESDALE, from York, Yardley, and other places, against the Repeal of the Corn-laws.—By Lord DACRE, from the Magistrates of Hertford, and Bradford, against the existing Beer Laws; and from Rutford, for a uniform Penny Postage. —By Lord BROUGHAM, from Manchester, and other places, against the Beer Laws; also from a great number of places, for the Repeal of the Corn-laws; and from Oswestry, against Oaths.

RAILWAYS — (IRELAND).] Lord *Brougham* presented petitions from two places in the county of Tipperary, in favour of promoting Railways in Ireland. Having presented these two petitions from the respectable persons who had signed them, it was but fair for him to state, that although he approved of every facility that could possibly be given for the construction of railways in Ireland, yet, that he should most decidedly oppose any attempt to obtain from this country a grant of the public money, for that, in his opinion, most unjustifiable project—very fit to be carried into effect without any undue pressure, either for or against it, highly unfit to vote money for it, to go to a country to which it would not naturally go—contrary to every sound principle of legislation—and, very likely in any country, except Ireland, to be made the means of practices which were called jobs.—Therefore he gave notice, that he should strenuously oppose any such effort, and with a view to enable him to oppose it more successfully, he should next week move for certain returns for showing what, in an inflammatory way, was generally stated to be untrue, namely, the immense sums we got from Ireland, and the very little we did for it. It was too much the practice to make such statements; he did not grudge any thing that was done for Ireland, but he wished to have the truth stated.

BRITISH NAVY—RETURNS.] The Earl of *Hardwicke* wished to trespass on the House for a few minutes in consequence of the remarks which had fallen from the noble Earl opposite (Minto) the other night. In the course of the debate, that noble Lord stated, that he was satisfied with the reserve of the navy, and, that he placed great reliance on his demonstration-ships; and the noble Lord complained of his (Lord Hardwicke's) having stated that which was untrue with regard to the two points, viz., the masts of the Revenge, one of the demonstration-ships, not being ready, and, that there were no complete suits of sails for line-of-battle ships at Plymouth; and the noble Earl further stated, that certain parties were aggrieved in consequence of his having said, that the returns were false. Now, with regard to the Revenge. It was his duty to acquaint their Lordships that he was at Portsmouth himself, that he went as a naval officer to ascertain the state of the dock-yard, and if anything had been misstated, the blame rested entirely with himself. The Revenge was one of those ships which the noble Earl stated to be in readiness for active service, but he (Lord Hardwicke) found her fore-mast was not hooped; her main-mast not finished; and he was informed that the contract for the iron work would not be completed in less than eleven days. He understood the noble Earl to say there were other masts in store. He (Lord Hardwicke) never said there were not, but what number of masts had the noble Lord? The noble Lord stated, that he had three sets; he (Lord Hardwicke) would give him five; but there were eleven sail of the line dismasted in the harbour. The whole of the ordinary were dismasted. The noble Lord would remember, that he (Lord Hardwicke) said the reserve was not sufficient, and that he entered into some detail to prove it. The noble Earl said, with reference to the sails in store at Plymouth, that he was at fault, and he was ready to admit that he was so; but suppose he granted that, did it alter his argument with respect to the condition of the reserve? The noble Lord said, he had seven sets of sails. Was that all the noble Lord had got? He (Lord Hardwicke) stated, on the previous night of discussion, that there was not a complete suit of sails for a single line-of-battle ship in store. The noble Earl stated, that there were complete suits of sails for three first rates, but it turned out, that on the 31st of January there were some of these sails deficient. There were three suits of sails for second rates, with the exception of six fore-top sails, six main-top sails, and four mizen-top sails; and there were three suits of sails for third rates, complete. The noble Lord seemed to think, that all his remarks were confined to the deficiency of sails, and had boasted, that he had sixty-six top-sails, and he must have rummaged every hole and corner, and included sails of all sizes. He (Lord Hardwicke) had also stated, that at Portsmouth dock-yard, there was not a suit of sails for a frigate or sloop, or brig—there were no second rates sails in store. There were two sets of sails for a first rate, including the Britannia, and one for a third rate in store. These statements were made for the purpose of pointing out the deficiency in stores at the present time as compared with the year 1826. The noble Lord seemed to congratulate himself, because with twenty-one sail of the line, at Plymouth, he had, according to his own shewing, seven suits of sails, and, according to his, (Lord Hardwicke's) three suits. He would now go to frigates, and it appeared, that there were for fourth rates, one suit, and for fifth rates, five suits, making six suits of sails for eighteen sail of frigates, at Plymouth. There was not a complete suit of sails in Plymouth dock-yard, for a sloop or brig, except the Acorn. With respect to rigging, there was ten suits of rigging for twenty-one sail of the line, and eleven suits of rigging for eighteen sail of frigates. He mentioned these points to show how accurate he had been generally; but he begged their Lordships' pardon for the single inaccuracy he had been led into on a former occasion. With regard to the return made to the Admiralty, he thought there must be some misunderstanding, or how was it possible that thirty sail of the line could be ready for sea, when there was such a deficiency of sails, rigging, and other stores. Did the noble Lord know, that for his demonstration ships there was not a single top-sail yard in store? He did not mean to say, that the returns were false, because he was satisfied, that the gentlemen connected with these departments would not state anything knowing it to be incorrect or false; but he did impugn them then, and he did so now, because there is a firm belief on the part of the country, that these vessels are not in the state of efficiency and readiness that had been represented, and, as the noble Earl stated, his returns led him to believe.

The Earl of *Minto* was extremely sorry that he was not aware of the noble Lord's intention of addressing the House, or he should have come down prepared with such documents as would enable him to have given a more satisfactory reply. On the former night, he had merely stated, that the officers of Portsmouth and Plymouth were anxious to state to their Lordships' House, that they would vouch for the accuracy of the returns. That had been his object in rising, and he had confined himself strictly to it. The first point to which he would refer was, the statement with respect to the lower masts of the Revenge, which it was said were not hooped, while he (Earl Minto) had stated that she was in a state of readiness to be sent to sea. The fact was, that the lower masts of the Revenge were her original masts, in which she had been paid off. On her being paid off, her masts were surveyed and found sound, but being on the construction of the late surveyor of the navy, Sir Robert Sepping, and being found strained, in order to secure them, it was proposed to put in new cheeks and fishes. These were prepared, but in consequence of the wood being new, it was thought advisable, so long as the ship was not required, to leave them unfixed to season. That was the explanation he had received. At the same time he had desired to know, in the event of her services being required, when she would be ready for sea, and he was told that in eight and forty hours the masts could be put on board. He had also written to know whether, in the event of a sudden call, there were other masts suitable for the Revenge, and unappropriated, and the reply was that there were; at the date of the noble Earl's visit, the 24th of February, complete suits of sails for seven sail of the line, and altogether in store sixty-six topsails for ships of the line—with regard to the noble Earl's representation of a deficiency of sails at Plymouth, the Master Attendant stated, that the noble Earl having visited one sail-room was perfectly satisfied with what he saw and heard, and declined going into any of the other rooms. With respect to the other parts of the noble Earl's speech he could produce papers, but which he had not now about him, from which he could answer in detail. He would produce those upon an early occasion. The noble Lord had said that there were no topsails for demonstration-ships. He thought the noble Earl was entirely mistaken here. But if his papers should not bear him out in this declaration, although he had the strongest conviction that they would, he would confess that he had been exceedingly in error, and that in that case our supply of stores was far short of what it ought to be, and what was indispensable to the service of the country.

The Duke of *Wellington* was apprehensive their Lordships had entirely overlooked the most important part of this momentous question. He was happy, indeed, to hear that the Revenge had three good masts, but he would beg leave to remind them, that the discussion had turned upon demonstration-ships, which, if called upon, were not ready for action. He would ask noble Lords, were not we at war in two quarters of the world at this moment?—We had a war, on our hands, in America, and we were carrying on war to a great extent in Asia. He thought, therefore, that the forces of this country should be on a war establishment—whereas, this discussion had turned upon the question of the propriety of supporting a peace establishment—nay, more, a reduced peace establishment. What! carrying on war in two quarters of the world, at the same time, with a reduced peace establishment! He would remind their Lordships, that nearly two years ago he warned them against the consequences of persevering in such an attempt. He believed since that time they had been feeling the inconvenience of such a course, and he trusted in God, that danger and disaster might not soon make them feel still more the fatal error of persevering in that system. A peace establishment—even a small peace establishment—might be very fit and very proper for service in time of peace; but when you come to carry on war, your peace establishments would not be found equal to perform the duties required from them in time of peace, and likewise those extensive duties required from them in time of war. Now, he would like to call their Lordships' attention to one important point as illustrating the dangerous absurdity of carrying on war service with a peace establishment in the navy. In the month of August last year, a discussion took place in the House with respect to the blockade in Mexico. In his opinion, as well as in the opinion of several noble Lords, it was expedient to send a squadron of her Majesty's ships to that part of the world to look after the blockade, and to afford protection to the lives and commerce of her Majesty's subjects in that country. The French Government did not carry on war with a peace establishment. When they went to war with Mexico, and sent a force there, it was a force upon a war establishment; and what happened, they carried on war operations, and war operations of a very active description; but we being engaged in a war with part of America, and having only a peace establishment, were obliged to take our ships engaged in operations of war, from North America, where they were for the purpose of putting down the rebellion in Canada, to send them to the gulph of Mexico, to perform the peace duties of giving protection to the commerce of British subjects. Admiral Sir Charles Paget was ordered with his squadron to perform those duties in North America, and that squadron was subsequently withdrawn, for the purpose of being sent to Mexico to perform peace duties—that was a point which he complained of. We were carrying on war with America, and also in Asia; both of them requiring all the force and power which this country could send out, in order to bring that war to an early and honourable termination. We were doing that with a reduced peace establishment, and incurring all descriptions of risk in every other part of the world. And this was the case while these disputes between noble Earls were going on upon whether there were or were not two or three masts, more or less in the dockyards of this country, while, in point of fact, comparatively the whole of the force at this moment was unarmed and unfit for the contests that were going forward. He had stated this over and over again a year and a half ago, and he now repeated, that our force was totally inadequate even to peace duties. A noble Lord, a few evenings ago, adverted, from a correspondence that he had, to the inconveniences resulting to the colonies from the vast number of volunteers that had been called under arms in that particular spot. The truth was, that both agricultural and every other interest was at a stand-still there, and though a soldier was saved by every volunteer that was called into the service, yet an infinitely larger sum of money was in that way required. It was known to all the world, and must be known to the Government, that our establishment was quite inadequate to bring the wars that were now going on to an early and honourable end, and which never could be successfully accomplished unless the wars were undertaken in earnest.

The Marquess of *Lansdowne* said, the only question before the House was, that a petition should lie on the Table, and the only notice that had been given was of a motion for the production of a memorial respecting the administration of justice in Mullingar. He did not object to the observations made by the noble Duke, but he was sure the noble Duke would feel with him that the subjects on which he had touched were so important, that they ought not only not to have been entered upon without notice, but that they ought not to have been entered upon in the absence of the noble Lord at the head of the Government, who was prevented from attending in his place from indisposition. The present example might induce their Lordships to be a little more attentive in future to the order of their proceedings. Upon an incidental proceeding the noble Duke had announced his opinions and apprehensions on topics of vast importance, and in estimating the importance of those matters he could not yield to the noble Duke, or any one else. In his opinion they required to be the subject of grave consideration. He did not rise, therefore, to follow either the noble Duke or the two noble Lords who had preceded him, the two latter, in their discussion of adaptation of sails and masts at Plymouth and Portsmouth; but he would say he trusted the noble Duke would afford his noble Friend at the head of the Government a future opportunity of explanation on this subject. While he could not shut his eyes to those grave subjects of apprehension, in various parts of the world, which might eventually affect the interests of the country, he could not admit that this country was in a state of war. He could not admit that this country was in a state of war with any maritime power. He contended, and any of their Lordships who had looked into the details of the subject must know, that while this country had a peace establishment, it was a peace establishment superior to almost any peace establishment that had ever been known to exist in any former period of the maritime history of the country. Not only was it a larger peace establishment than those which had existed before, and which at very recent periods had been thought by former Governments wholly adequate to maintain the integrity and dignity of the country; but being a peace establishment, it had up to this moment not been once found wanting in any quarter of the globe in which it had been necessary to assert the dignity of the British flag, and maintain the interest of the Government. Without entering into further details, he wished to set the noble Duke right upon an important point, upon which he had unintentionally been led into mistake, and which it was material, both as to the credit of the Government, and to the establishments of the country, should be distinctly understood. The noble Duke supposed that the British force, which for the protection of British interests had been recently, usefully, and effectively employed upon the coast of Mexico, could only be obtained by withdrawing that force from the coast of Canada. He could assure the noble Duke, that he had been misinformed on that point. The greater portion of the force had been sent out from this country, and no one single ship had been withdrawn from the coast of Canada for that purpose, which had not been so withdrawn by previous orders, independently of what was occurring in Mexico; and for the plain reason, that upon the coast of Canada, and in the river St. Lawrence, it would have been unsafe to have retained them there. Two ships had been removed from the coast of Canada, that had not been ordered to be removed before; and the greater force employed in Mexico, was a force at liberty in this country, and despatched from it to meet the exigencies that had arisen. This explanation he felt it to be his duty to give, but he was anxious that no further discussion should take place in the absence of his noble Friend at the head of the Government.

The Duke of *Wellington* would not have said a word, had it not been that he considered the observations of the noble Lords who preceded him, originated in something like a mistake. There was war at this moment carrying on by us in two quarters of the globe, and he certainly considered, that our force was insufficient to bring that war to an honourable and early termination. That was his opinion. The noble Lord opposite had said he was mistaken in respect of the ships that had been called from North America; but so far from being mistaken, he believed he might have gone further than even he had gone. When they began to make war with peace establishments they starved the peace establishments as well as the war, because they had no reserve for any other purpose. He hoped, that noble Lords would not experience the truth of what he had stated; he hoped they would feel no inconvenience from carrying on a war with a peace establishment; he had protested against the course two years ago, and he protested against it now. He felt strongly upon the subject, but he could assure their Lordships, that in that feeling he had no desire whatever, except to promote the honour of the service. If the noble Lord wished the question to be discussed in another shape he could have no objection to it.

Subject dropped.

PARDONS (IRELAND)—MULLINGAR.] The Marquess of *Westmeath* said, that with respect to the motion of which he had given notice, he would state to their Lordships, that the subject of the memorials to which he referred stood thus—that if any reasons could be adduced for the exercise of lenity in the cases connected with them, there could be no reason whatever for withholding these memorials from their Lordships. The number of cases in which the noble Marquess opposite had extended mercy in the course of his Government was so great, that it was incumbent on him to satisfy their Lordships, in every case which he was called upon to answer, that had he done so on substantial grounds, and he hoped, therefore, that the noble Marquess would not oppose the production of the papers to which he should presently refer. The case which he was now going to bring under their Lordships notice related to a transaction that had taken place in the month of November, 1836. He should have brought it under the attention of their Lordships before, but he had not received the documents connected with it until lately, since which he had had no opportunity of doing so, when the noble Marquess (Normanby) was present. It appeared, that in November, 1836, at a place not far from Mullingar, in the county of Westmeath, about which, as it was his native county, he felt the greatest interest, but which, he regretted to say, was in a more disturbed state than any other county in the kingdom, and where even within the last week, whilst the judges were sitting there, most disgraceful proceedings had taken place, and where, within the last two months, six most cold-blooded murders had been perpetrated, a man named Mahony, who was employed by a gentleman in the neighbourhood, was fiercely assaulted by four persons at the entrance to his master's stables; he fought his way to the gateway leading to his master's house, and was there struck by a man, who was afterwards identified to be Cooke, so violently with a stick that his skull was laid bare. He then struggled until he reached his master's house, and there, from loss of blood and additional outrage, as it afterwards appeared at the trial, became so ill that he was not expected to survive. In consequence of the nature of the assault, two of the men who were apprehended, viz., Cooke and Wholahan, were not allowed to be bailed out until a considerable time had elapsed, and the man was said to be recovering. In the March following these two men were brought to trial before the judges of assize, and they were sentenced to fifteen months' imprisonment. Mr. Uniacke, one of the magistrates of the county, hearing that there was an application about to be made to the Government by the prisoners for a mitigation of their sentence, wrote to the Government on the subject on the 27th of July, 1837, and to that letter received the following answer:—

"Dublin Castle, July 31, 1837.

"Sir,—I beg to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 27th instant, on the case of Thomas Cooke and Patrick Wholahan, prisoners in the gaol of the county of Westmeath, under sentence of imprisonment, and to acquaint you, that the Lord-lieutenant referred a memorial from the prisoners to the judge, and when his report is received your letter will be submitted to his Excellency at the same time.

"I have the honour to be, Sir, your most obedient humble servant,

"J. Drummond.

"Thomas F. Uniacke, Esq., Mullingar."

On the 17th of August following Mr. Uniacke received another letter from Mr. Drummond, to the following effect:—

"Dublin Castle, Aug. 17, 1837.

"Sir, I beg to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 27th ult., on the case of Thomas Cooke and P. Wholahan, prisoners in the gaol of the county of Westmeath, under sentence of imprisonment, and to acquaint you, that the Lord-lieutenant has had the judge's report under consideration, and decided, that the law must take its course.

"I have the honour to be, Sir, your most obedient humble servant.

"T. Drummond.

"Thomas F. Uniacke, Esq., Mullingar."

What, then, would be the surprise of their Lordships, when after this they heard that his Excellency, the Lord-lieutenant had thought fit in December, 1837, when the principal of these two persons had undergone little more than half his imprisonment, to enlarge him without bail? [The Marquess of *Normanby:* No; not without bail.] He understood so. [The Marquess of *Normanby:* Ay, ay; you understood so.] He might be mistaken, but his only object in bringing these matters forward was the interest of his country, and far was it from his wish to bring any charge against the noble Marquess without full foundation for it. This very day he had received a letter from a gentleman residing in the county of Westmeath, in which he said, that they were living in a state of civil war, and that it was the duty of the gentry to entreat and to insist on the Government paying attention to this subject. When the noble Marquess spoke of being justified in liberating this man, he wished to know whether it were on account of his health; because, if so, there was in every gaol an infirmary, and an officer who was paid for doing his duty, so that this man might have been attended to. Or was it from the good nature of the noble Marquess? He knew his own countrymen well; and although they were far from being enlightened, but were, on the contrary, most ignorant, yet they were a sharp-sighted set of men; and if they found they had to deal with a governor on whom they could impose or gain their point by a little overstraining of the truth, they would endeavour to do so; and if the noble Marquess had exercised his good nature in this instance, he had done wrong, and it did more credit to his heart than to his understanding. The noble Lord opposite said the other evening that he should, on going to Ireland, follow in the footsteps of the noble Marquess; but he hoped in God that the noble Lord would, for his own reputation, avoid doing so; and if he hoped that benedictions might follow him, as he stated they had done his noble predecessor, it would be necessary for him to avoid it, for he strongly doubted whether the noble Marquess had met with many benedictions from the peaceable and respectable inhabitants of that country, though no doubt he had been blessed by a great number of the unpunished malefactors there. It was painful for him to make such an observation, but it was his duty to see these matters set right, and he was more particularly justified in these observations, because it was his intention to ask their Lordships to apply to the House of Commons for certain returns which had for a long time lain on their table, but had not yet been produced to their Lordships. Now, although several of the cases he should presently refer to had been explained away by the noble Marquess, yet it was incumbent on him to show, that he had done his duty in this respect as to a considerable number that were discharged, and others who were released on bail; yet from one of the returns which he had just spoken of it appeared, that of those persons whose sentences had been commuted by the noble Marquess, twenty-seven were under sentence of death, thirty-three were to have been transported for life, two for fourteen years, sixty-three for seven years, and 960 for minor offences; and yet out of this number, 1,085 in all, in only forty-one cases was any bail taken, so that the great majority of those persons had been enlarged without bail, although that ought to have been entered into. In four cases only had the liberations been made by the recommendation of the judges who had tried them, and one on the recommendation of the assistant-barrister of the county. Other reasons might, perhaps, be adduced, such as sickness, good conduct, &c., and of these the noble Marquess might have the full benefit in his reply. He would just advert to a matter of this nature which had been brought under discussion the other night, respecting which the noble Viscount opposite had taunted him, although the case had come before him in his magisterial character. He referred to the case of Ward and Gannon, who the noble Marquess had said were liberated on the recommendation of the assistant barrister. Now, at the time those men were tried there were eighteen magistrates on the bench with himself, and only three of them had signed the memorial for the liberation of these criminals, and the magistrate whose name the noble Marquess had mentioned as a judge of the comparative guilt or innocence of those persons was not amongst those magistrates who had tried them. It would, therefore, have been more delicate to him if the noble Viscount had not introduced the name of that individual, and said he was to be referred to, although he was not present at the trial. The noble Marquess had alleged, as a reason for the liberation of these men, that it had been granted on the application of the prosecutor, and a memorial numerously signed by respectable persons, and amongst whom there were two Protestant clergymen. But the noble Marquess should remember, that it was not always safe for Protestant clergymen in Ireland to refuse to put their names to memorials for mitigation of the punishment of prisoners, and he certainly thought that one of the rev. Gentlemen who signed this memorial, and with whom he had been acquainted from his childhood, was very much to blame, and that he had done a weak act; but the Executive Government should have the fairness to consider whether it was their duty to listen to such applications, or to turn a deaf ear to them whenever they were made. The noble Marquess concluded by moving "An Address, for any memorial addressed to the Lord-lieutenant or government of Ireland, for the liberation of Thomas Cooke from the gaol of Mullingar, who had been convicted at the general assizes in March, 1837, and sentenced to fifteen months' imprisonment; and also, copy of the Lord-lieutenant's order, signed T. Drummond, dated the 11th of December, 1837, for the liberation of Thomas Cooke, addressed to the high sheriff of the county of Westmeath."

The Marquess of *Normanby* would endeavour, in his reply to the noble Marquess, to confine himself to that which the noble Marquess had almost omitted from his speech—viz., those particular cases to which the motion of the noble Marquess, of which he had given such timely notice, referred: he should afterwards find it necessary to allude to the second case, but he would, at present, confine himself to the first. It was most unfair to their Lordships when the noble Marquess opposite said, that he had drawn no distinction between producing the opinions of the judges in these cases and the memorials themselves; for what he had said was, that the production of these memorials would lead to an exposure of the Lord-lieutenant's confidential notes on the opinions of the judges, and he thought, that unless some stronger case was made out by the noble Marquess, it would be only wasting their Lordships' time and establishing a bad and dangerous precedent, one which he would not attempt to establish by producing these memorials with the Lord-lieutenant's confidential memorandums in them. With respect to the case of Cooke and Wholahan, soon after these men were tried, a memorial was presented to the Government most respectably signed in their favour. Amongst the signatures were those of two Protestant clergymen. This memorial he referred to Mr. Baron Pennefather, who had tried the prisoners, who stated, that Cooke had received an excellent character; that he had never been impeached before with bad conduct, and that, had it not been for the line of defence which that prisoner had taken, he should have attached more weight to that defence, and apportioned the sentence accordingly. Upon seeing this report, however, and having the magistrates' letters before him, he had desired that the law might take its course. About two months after that time Dr. Vignolles, his first chaplain, who had property in the county, told him that he had inquired into Cooke's character, and that he had found it unimpeachable up to the time of this offence, and that whatever imputation there might attach to Cooke, yet his conviction had principally been produced by the line of defence which he had adopted. Mr. Reid, the rector of Kilbride, in that county, had also said, that he had known Cooke for five years, that he had always borne a high character, and that he thought if his defence had been differently conducted, he would have been acquitted. It was said, that the reason of such defence being made was, that the counsel had not had time to study the case. He had received a letter to the same effect from the Rev. Mr. Ward, as well as a recommendation from the Presbyterian chaplain of the gaol in which the prisoner was confined, and also another from Mr. Sheil. Having considered this case, he wrote, saying, that if the man could get sureties to keep the peace, that nothing was heard against him, and his conduct was reported to be good during that period, he should be liberated at the end of two months. The report received at the end of that time was favourable, and the man was liberated in the month of December, 1837; but on giving bail, himself in 20*l*., and in two sureties of 10*l*. But if their Lordships were to judge his government by cases of this kind, there were four years to go through, and many were ready and interested to find out such cases, and who would be indefatigable in their endeavours to bring them forward as a proof of his misgovernment. He thought he might well leave the case here, considering the manner in which the allegations had been made against him, and, judging from the cases of Ward and Gannon, and also of Cooke, the grounds on which he had been charged with respect to them, and the total failure of those grounds he thought he might on them rest his general defence to the general charge against him. The allegations against him were, that in the exercise of the prerogative of mercy, he had acted differently from his predecessors in the Lord-lieutenancy of Ireland; that he had swept the gaols of the country; and that in extending pardon to so many criminals, he had been guilty of cruelty towards society at large in Ireland. Now, without meaning to take up the time of their Lordships by going into the whole case, he would beg their attention to a few little facts; he would beg to quote the opinion of a right hon. Gentleman, who had, for a considerable period, held the office of Secretary for the Home Department, and who had been distinguished for the ability with which he had discharged its duties, and the minute attention which he had paid to all its details—he alluded to Mr. Secretary Peel. In a discussion on a motion of Mr. Hume, in June, 1823, for abolishing the office of Lord-lieutenant of Ireland, which was at that time held by a nobleman whose name he could never mention but in terms of respect and admiration — he alluded to a noble Marquess, the brother of the noble Duke (Wellington) opposite — in that discussion Mr. Peel in opposing the motion, and by way of illustrating the inconvenience of which the abolition of the office would be productive, said: "To prove to the House what would be the probable augmentation of business in the Home-office by acceding to the motion, he would only mention, that in the past year there were in Ireland 8,312 criminal convictions, out of these there were applications for mercy in 2,400 cases, out of which 400 capital offences were set aside."* He (Lord Normanby) did not quote this as meaning to cast any, the slightest, blame on the noble Marquess, who was at that time at the head of the Irish government for having too extensively exercised the prerogative of mercy; on the contrary, he thought that noble Lord had acted right; but what, let him ask, would be said of his government, if it could be shown that he had set aside 400 capital sentences in one year? What would be said, if, through a mistaken desire for popularity, as it was called, he had set aside even half that number of capital sentences, or received half the number of applications for mercy which were made in the year 1822? He would repeat what he had said on a former occasion, that he had bestowed the greatest attention on the consideration of all the cases of applications for mercy which had come before him, and that not less than three or four hours each day were consumed in that way, in addition to his other duties. So far as he himself was concerned, he could have no objection to the whole of the applications for mercy that had been made to him during the whole time of his government in Ireland, with his memoranda on each, being laid on the Table of the House. He used the word "Table" in this sense figuratively, for not ten tables such as that before him could contain them; but his objections to the motion were, that the production of those documents would be a bad precedent, and that no good ground had been laid for it. As some mention had been made of medical certificates, he would say one word on that subject. From the manner in which it was mentioned, one would suppose that the certificates sent up to the Government, accompanying applications for mitigation of punishment, might be those of any medical man selected by the prisoner; but that was not the case. The certificates were in all instances those of the regular medical attendant on the gaol. He had found what appeared to him some irregularity in the form of the circular sent to the medical attendants, and he directed that the circular should inform the surgeons that in those cases where it was found, that confinement was injurious to the prisoner, he (the surgeon) should state his opinion whether the further confinement was likely to endanger life. As to the case of Coghlan, which had been mentioned on a former evening, and in which some surprise was expressed that the Government should not have known either through the judge who had tried him, or through the gaoler of the prison in which he had been confined, that he had been tried before —Coghlan was one of nine or ten prisoners who had been discharged from the hulks, and whose cases had been inquired into by Major Palmer, the inspector-general of prisons, by Dr. Roney, and Mr. Drummond, who had recommended their discharge. He had no reason at the time to believe that he was the same party who had been tried and convicted for a former offence, for Judge Johnson, who was the same Judge who had tried both cases if the prisoner was the same, and who had recommended the commutation of his sentence, had made no mention of the previous trial and conviction. The gaoler could not have been aware that he was the same party, because when he was committed in 1836 he was described as twenty-one years old, but when he was committed again in 1838 he was described as only twenty years. He had now no doubt that he was the same party who had been previously tried, but he had no means of knowing it at the time. There was one circumstance connected with Coghlan's second crime which, though it did not alter its legal character, was mitigatory of its moral enormity. It appeared from a note of Judge Johnson, who tried him, that the prosecutrix admitted in her evidence that she was a person of irregular habits, and obtained her livelihood by prostitution, and that up to one o'clock on the very morning of the offence she had been walking in the streets of Birr in pursuit of her disreputable calling. As to the case of Cooke, the application to the Government on his behalf had been signed by the hon. and rev. Mr. Brown, who was in effect the prosecutor, for it was his bailiff who had been attacked. He had long known Mr. Brown, who had declared to him his full conviction that Cooke was innocent of the offence, and certainly Mr. Brown was a man who would be far above signing any such document if he did not feel that he was fully warranted in doing it. He was one whose strictly faithful and impartial discharge of his duties had endeared him to his neighbours, and to those who differed from him in religion. He did not complain of charges being brought against himself, but on the part of an upright and independent clergyman, he must protest against the imputation thrown out by the noble Marquess, that he had been induced to sign the application to Government by intimidation. He would not now trouble their Lordships with any further observations, but would reserve himself on some other points on which he had intended to speak until those matters were brought more fully under the consideration of the House.

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* Hansard, New Series, Vol. ix., p.1233.

The Duke of *Wellington* said, that certainly it was not the practice of that House to interfere with the exercise of the prerogative of mercy, and he confessed he should be sorry to see it make any change in that respect. But he must say, that when cases like those stated by the noble Marquess were mentioned — when the noble Marquess defended himself in the exercise of the prerogative of mercy by quoting the opinions of judges and lawyers, and the statements set forth in memorials and applications to the Government for mercy, the House had some little claim to be admitted into the secret of those opinions. These were not authority, and though the noble Marquess might have acted on them, it must still have been on his own responsibility; but when the noble Marquess referred to them in the House, the House he repeated, had some little right to something more of them. At the same time the House should not call for documents the production of which might be injurious to the public service. The case of the prisoner Cooke was that of a conviction, not merely of an assault, but of an assault of so serious a nature, that he was not allowed to give bail until the man who had been assaulted was considered out of danger. The Lord-lieutenant, on being applied to for the extension of mercy to the prisoner, obtained the report of the learned judge who tried him, and on the consideration of that report he decided that the law should be allowed to take its course; but on a further application being made to him he thought fit to remit the remainder of the sentence, taking security for the man's future good behaviour. Now he must say, that considering the nature of the offence of which this man had been convicted, and that offences of that nature were rather common in Ireland, he could not help thinking it unfortunate that the noble Marquess had not adhered to his first decision, and allowed the man to undergo the full term of his imprisonment in order to show to the country what the opinion of the Government was with respect to such offences. Their Lordships had for several years heard of reforms of the criminal jurisprudence of the country. He did not now see in his place the noble and learned Lord (Lord Brougham) who had taken a lead in the discussions on that subject, but if he had heard that noble and learned Lord once, he had heard him a dozen times declare, that the great end of all those reforms was the certainty of punishment. The practice, however, which prevailed in the Irish Government—he did not now refer in particular to that of the noble Marquess, but to the Government of Ireland generally—was such that there was no certainty of punishment, and for this reason, that after all the chances of acquittal which the accused party had on his trial, he had also the chance of escape from punishment which rested on private application to the Executive Government. He regretted, that the noble and learned Lord to whom he had alluded was not now in his place, as he could, and no doubt would, illustrate the effect of those private applications for the remission of punishment and consequent evasion of the due execution of the law in a much better manner than he could do; but the fact being as had been stated, that such applications were made, and made with success in many instances, it must lead to great uncertainty of punishment, and, of course, to great uncertainty in the execution of the law. It was quite obvious, that the noble Marquess having in the first instance decided that the law should be allowed to take its course, and having afterwards changed his mind in consequence of private applications, gave an encouragement to such applications, which must increase the uncertainty of punishment in that country. This was not the first time that cases of the kind had come under the notice of their Lordships. A case had occurred last year where a party had had his sentence remitted in consequence of private application. The principle, he repeated, was a dangerous one and must be seriously injurious to the execution of the law.

The Earl of *Charleville* said, that as the noble Marquess had alluded to him in no very courteous terms, he could not avoid saying a few words. The noble Marquess had alluded to the case of Coghlan. Now, it did happen that that person had been committed in 1831 to the gaol of Tullamore on a charge of Ribandism, but from the difficulty of procuring evidence on such a charge he had been discharged by proclamation. He was the following year, committed on a charge of robbery. The noble Marquess had alluded to the woman who gave evidence on another trial. Now, he would tell the noble Marquess the character of this man. The noble Marquess was correct in stating, that the woman was an unfortunate female; but how did John Coghlan get his living? By waylaying these women returning from the barracks to Birr, and robbing them of the money they had got from their calling, and very often assaulting them. The noble Marquess said, "After this recommendation of Judge Johnson, should I not have listened to his recommendation?" He brought no charge against the noble Marquess; he knew not whether John Coghlan was undergoing his sentence or not. He brought the charge for the former case, where he was tried, found guilty, and sentence of death was recorded against him. He was sent to the hulks, and afterwards was pardoned. He then was committed for rape, tried, found guilty, and left for execution. In the case of Michael Bryan, the noble Lord said, on Tuesday night, that he had confounded and confused his statement. He had done neither; if there was confusion or confounding in it, it was on the noble Marquess's side, and not on his. The noble Marquess said, that he commuted the sentence of that man on the certificate of the surgeon of the hulks. He understood the noble Marquess differently on the former occasion. He was willing to take his statement either way; it should be either the surgeon of the hulks or of the gaol; if of the hulks the noble Marquess commuted his sentence on that recommendation. To show the inaccuracy of the details, the noble Marquess said the letter was signed by T. Drummond, whereas it was signed by Lord Morpeth. The man's sentence was commuted, and he was seven months in the gaol of Tullamore. And did the noble Marquess mean to say, that he having commuted his sentence from transportation for seven years to one year's imprisonment in the gaol of Tullamore, on the ground of ill health, and on the surgeon's certificate to that effect, that surgeon not having seen the prisoner, seven months after, said he was in a state of health not to bear imprisonment for a year, and his imprisonment was forthwith commuted. The noble Marquess was misinformed as to this case. The surgeon of the gaol on application declined to give the certificate, and they applied to an apothecary in the town of Tullamore, and that apothecary signed the certificate, on which the noble Marquess again commuted the sentence, and let the prisoner out. The noble Marquess had alluded to the number of applications for pardon during the Government of Lord Wellesley. He did not tell their Lordships the number of applications which were made to him. He mentioned that Lord Wellesley commuted the sentences on some 400 prisoners; he did not tell their Lordships whether Lord Wellesley let them out of gaol, or whether he took bail for their good behaviour; but of this he was perfectly certain, that on any comparison with Lord Wellesley or any other chief Governor of Ireland, there would be no comparison between his conduct and the conduct of the noble Marquess in letting prisoners out of gaol. Upwards of 1,300 persons had been let out of prison by the noble Marquess in twenty-one months, and only in forty-one cases had bail been taken for them, and there were amongst them men guilty of every crime, excluding the crime of murder. With respect to the case of Cooke, let out of prison on the recommendation of Mr. Berry Tennant, he did not see how that could be reconciled with the letter of Mr. T. Drummond. The letter stated—" The Lord-Lieutenant has had the judge's report under consideration, and has decided that the law must take its course." Afterwards the noble Marquess used his own discretion, and went against the opinion of the judge. But he could assure the noble Marquess he should be ready soon to meet him on the general subject, and he must say he should be very anxious for the production of those memorials, because he laid the very greatest stress on their production, to shew the influence by which prisoners had been allowed to get out of gaol, and have their sentences commuted; and he would prove that the persons signing those memorials could not by any possibility have any knowledge of the prisoners, and that they did not reside in that part of the country where they were; and the noble Marquess showing the sources that he might choose to place confidence in, passed over all the Magistrates, and all the persons of respectability, whose characters were at stake for the information they gave him, and who could have given a true and particular account of the characters of the convicts in question—but he passed them over, and went to sources which he now wished to conceal; but if these memorials were produced, their lordships would be able to trace the influence which had been used.

The Marquess of *Normanby* said, that so far from attempting to conceal anything he thought he had brought forward his information rather too distinctly. With regard to the opinion of Mr. B. Tennant, he never stated, that he had recommended a revision of the sentence; so far from that, he (the Marquess of Normanby) had said, it was on the report of Baron Pennefather, that he had decided, in the first instance, that the law must take its course. It was on a further investigation as to the character of Cooke, that he had commuted his sentence. With regard to John Coghlan, he did not know so much of him as the noble Earl seemed to do, and never disputed, that he was the same man. But by the return which made him out a hardened Ribandman in 1831, he must be a very precocious offender, because by the return to the Crown he was only twenty-one years of age in 1836, so that he could only have been sixteen years old when he was a hardened offender. Perhaps, as the noble Lord knew so much about him, he could tell whether John Coghlan had one eye? He had heard, that one of John Coghlan's eyes was completely gone, and the sight of the other was represented to be so nearly gone, that it was an utterly hopeless case. [The Earl of *Charleville* had heard of that.] He had not the least objection to John Coghlan being the same man, but only gave an opportunity of its being proved, that he was the same man.

The Earl of *Charleville* begged pardon for interrupting the noble Lord. He had the most respectable evidence to prove that he was the same man. He knew nothing about his eye, but very likely that was the cause which had prevented the surgeon to the hulks giving him a certificate. The circumstances relating to him were these—that when under sentence of transportation at the gaol of Tullamore he had behaved excessively ill, and was several times put into solitary confinement, and it was then found, that he had procured some lime, and for the purpose of getting a certificate, he introduced a portion of the lime into his eye, and was caught in the fact.

The Marquess of *Normanby* said, the noble Earl seemed to have information on the subject, and he was anxious to ascertain whether Coghlan was the same man or not. The noble Earl alluded to Michael Bryan. The case was this — Michael Bryan was refused by the surgeon to the transport, and sent back to gaol. When he had alluded to the grounds of the ultimate commutation of his sentence, he had stated, that they were of a mixed character, for the certificate was not of such a character as he should require, but was only a report of the state of his health. It appeared, that Michael Bryan had voluntarily given 10*l*. to the person he had assaulted, and had also given security, and, weighing all the circumstances together, he had given him his discharge.

The Earl of *Roden* was anxious to ascertain whether the noble Marquess did discharge Coghlan out of the gaol of Tullamore upon the certificate of an apothecary of the town, or whether it was on the certificate of the surgeon belonging to the gaol?

The Marquess of *Normanby* said, it was not a medical certificate, but it was signed by a medical assistant—by a person of the name of Dennis he thought. But he had not discharged him on that certificate; it was one of the ingredients only on which he had formed his judgment.

The Earl of *Charleville* said, he was prepared to produce Dr. Pierce as evidence—a man whose character stood as high as any surgeon's or doctor's in the empire, a man of undoubted qualification and great integrity—to show that this certificate of bad health had been improperly obtained. With regard to the liberation of another prisoner, a sergeant, whom the noble Marquess had stated as having risen from the ranks and lost a leg in the service, he was a man of the very worst character, a man who had married a woman of good fortune and much superior to himself, and who had behaved most infamously to her. He was a man in good circumstances, and the bail of 10*l*. which he had been required to give was nothing to him. When he was sentenced to transportation it was to the universal satisfaction of the neighbourhood, and to their universal dismay when he was set at liberty. The noble Lord said, it was in a casual rencontre that he had committed the assault for which he was sentenced to transportation. It was no such thing, but was a deliberate attack on a sheriff's officer in the execution of a writ, when he had scooped out his eye with a knife in a very shocking manner.

The Marquess of *Westmeath* in reply said, there was the document stating that the law was to take its course, and after that, there was a well-established case of morbid sensibility—a sort of itching of the fingers to sign pardons, such as was rarely seen. The noble Lord wanted to charge him with gathering up cases. In the county of Westmeath the noble Lord had gone to the gaol, and had enlarged on view nineteen prisoners. He would venture to say, that in the annals of the world there never was a case like that. Therefore, as respected the county of Westmeath, he was justified in bringing the cases forward. The noble Marquess seemed to put the hon. and rev. Mr. Brown forward to enable him to escape. He had known the hon. and rev. Gentleman from a child; he was his own friend; but he was sorry to say that on this occasion he had not acted with sound judgment. He had signed Cooke's memorial merely from good-nature, and because, being a clergyman, he did not like to oppose anything that appeared merciful. When parties were applied to to sign these memorials in Ireland, such was the system of intimidation that they dared not refuse to sign them, and this was the way they were got up. It was the peculiar duty and province of the Lord-lieutenant to have paid attention to the trials and convictions rather than to such kind of information. In conclusion, the noble Marquess said he would not press his motion.

Motion withdrawn.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Thursday, March 7, 1839.

Minutes.] Bill. Read a third time:—Transfer of Aids. —Read a first time:—Sale of Beer.

Petitions presented. By Sir A. Dalrymple, from Brighton, against any system of National Education not founded on the Scriptures.—By Mr. Broadley, from Liverpool, for a reduction of the Duty on Haytian Coffee.—By Mr. Blair, from a place in Wigtonshire, by Sir James Graham, from the Presbytery of Hamilton, and by Sir George Clerk, from Dundee, for Church Extension in Scotland.—By Messrs. Grote, Parrott, Wallace, Barneby, O'Connell, and Hume, the Attorney-General, Sir J. Y. Buller, and Sergeant Wilde, from a number of places, for the Repeal of the Corn-laws.—By Mr. Chapman, from several places, against the Repeal of the Corn-laws.—By Sir R. Inglis, from several Ecclesiastical Bodies, against the Ecclesiastical Duties and Revenues Bill.—By Mr. Wynne, from the Clergy of the Diocese of Bangor, and St. Asaph's, for the Improvement of Small Livings.—By the Attorney-General, from Edinburgh, for a uniform Penny Postage.—By Mr. O'Connell, from places in Waterford, for Justice to Ireland, or Repeal.

Crimes in Ireland.] Mr. *Shaw*, pursuant to notice, rose to move for certain papers relating to the state of Ireland. The necessity of such a motion had been forced on his mind by the remarkable omission from her Majesty's speech, of any allusion to the present social and moral condition of that country. If he had not been apprehensive, that he might cast an air of ridicule upon a subject which he desired to treat with every seriousness, he would have requested the clerk at the table to read the short paragraph in the speech from the throne which had reference to Ireland. It was a cold, and even, as regarded the only subject on which it touched, not very intelligible statement, that some undefined amendment of the municipal corporations was essential to the interests of that country. Now, he would ask any reasonable man, in or out of the House, whether he thought, that the peaceable and well-disposed subjects of her Majesty in Ireland ought to be content and satisfied with that single allusion to their interests, and that, too, at a moment when notoriously, in a great portion of that country, there was no security for property or person—when the law was set at open defiance, the functions of public justice usurped by self-constituted and irresponsible associations—when all the relations of society were disorganized, and when civilization could scarcely be said to exist in many parts of that distracted portion of her Majesty's dominions. He had framed his returns for which he meant to move, with a view to present a true picture to the House, and to the country, of the present condition of Ireland—of the extent to which crime and outrage prevailed there, the causes which had principally produced the evils which afflicted that country, and, as immediately and inseparably connected with them, the conduct of the Irish Government, particularly during the administration of Lord Normanby. In the first place, the returns for which he should move, might be thought to go into unnecessary details, but if the House would kindly give him its attention, he should be able to satisfy hon. Members of their necessity. He should endeavour to show, that the returns which had hitherto been officially or occasionally furnished to the House were both inaccurate, insufficient in extent, and in many respects delusory. The House was aware, that under the provisions of the statute 56th George 3rd, c. 120, and the 7th George 4th, c. 74, yearly criminal returns were made to Parliament; the first by the clerks of the crown and peace of the counties in Ireland, and the second, by the inspector-general of prisons. These returns had reference to matters in which the assizes and quarter sessions were concerned. He should deal separately with the matters before petty sessions. As far as respected the assizes, and the quarter sessions, the returns professed to be the same, but there was a most remarkable and unaccountable discrepancy between them. He was quite aware how dry a subject figures and calculations were at all times, and he should therefore briefly dismiss this part of the case, but he trusted he should have the attention of the noble Lord opposite (Lord Morpeth), and of all interested in the Government of Ireland. Under the acts of Parliament, he had stated the parties to whom he had alluded, were bound to return the number of all persons committed and brought to trial, together with the result of the proceedings, and accordingly both the returns which had hitherto been made, professed to do so. Now, he had compared the returns for the years 1836 and 1837, and there was this remarkable discrepancy between them. The prison report for the year 1837 returned 14,804 such prisoners, while the clerks of the crown and peace had returned 27,340. Thus, there was a difference between those two returns of 12,924. The reports for 1837 included the number of prisoners for trial at petty sessions, and in that respect differed from the reports of 1836. In the year 1836 the report of the inspectors of prisons stated the number of prisoners committed and tried during that year to have been 23,241, while the clerks of the crown and peace returned the number to have been 30,360. Upon comparing those reports, and the particular returns from each place, he found there was a real difference of 10,460, which had not been returned by the inspector of prisons, for, though the inspector returned 3,000 and odd prisoners tried at the petty sessions, there was still a difference between the two returns of 10,460 in one year, and 12,924 in the other. He could not discover upon what principle these different returns were made, at all events, the returns were so incorrect, as regarded committals and convictions, that it was impossible to rely on them. But he went further, and contended, that even if the returns were correct, the evil would still be unredressed, that evil being, that the committal of persons made amenable to justice bore but a small proportion to the number of offences and the number of offenders. Therefore it was, that by the first motion of which he had given notice, he asked for a return of all the outrages, crimes, and offences committed in the different counties and cities in Ireland during the last four years. As yet the House had been furnished with no regular returns of the crimes and outrages committed, though from time to time such returns had occasionally been moved for. The principal returns of that kind had been obtained on the motion of his hon. and learned Friend the Member for Bandon, and was a return of all outrages, crimes, and offences committed during the years 1836 and 1837, and of the rewards offered by the Lord-lieutenant for the discovery of the offenders. The return, however, in fact, only went over a period of eighteen months as stated by the inspector-general, but the objection he (Mr. Shaw) had to it was, that it was insufficient for the purposes for which it was required. In the first place, it merely gave a return of the offences returned to the constabulary, and it excluded the city of Dublin and other large places, which were not under the superintendence of the constabulary force. Now, the offences in Dublin last year would alone have given an item of 2,805 prisoners, therefore the returns to which he adverted did not show the actual number of offenders. Then there was a distinction to be drawn between the number of offences and the number of offenders; and it was to be remarked, that this return gave only the offences, which bore but a small proportion to the number of offenders. He had a paper which strongly developed this fact; it was a return which had been obtained by his hon. and gallant Friend, the Member for Armagh. His hon. and gallant Friend in 1836, moved for a return of all the persons committed to the gaol of the county of Tipperary during the years 1833, 1834, 1835, and part of 1836, distinguishing the offences for which they were committed; and there was a singular difference between the return of the offences committed and the number of persons concerned in those offences. He (Mr. Shaw), would take one single instance as a specimen of all. In the first three months of 1836, there were returned sixty-three persons as committed for murder, and ten for homicide; and yet the return of offences stated in the same paper, was only of sixteen murders and homicides; so that the number of offences or crimes bore no analogy to the number of offenders; and therefore it was, that he now proposed to amend the return in that respect, and the number of persons concerned in each crime, outrage, and offence, should be returned. But, again, the existing returns were not only insufficient, but in many respects delusory; and to this he begged to call the attention of the noble Lord opposite, because he was convinced that the noble Lord had been deceived himself, and had been made the instrument of deceiving the House and the public. In April, 1837, the noble Lord moved for a return of the outrages, &c., reported to the constabulary during the five months commencing September, 1836. The object on the face of the document itself seemed to be, to contrast the crimes committed during those five months with the number of crimes committed during the corresponding period of the preceding year, and at the foot of each page of the return that contrast was drawn, and it certainly did appear remarkable that there should have been such an immense diminution of crime between those two years. But this he (Mr. Shaw) would explain. The offences committed in 1837 were stated to have been 739 in number, while in the corresponding period of the preceding year they were returned at 1,773. This was, at first sight, a striking diminution; but he (Mr. Shaw) turned to a note appended to the return, and of which the noble Lord had never apprised the House, by the officer who prepared it, which fully explained that difference. The Inspector-general said in a note, dated January 3, 1836, "The mode of reporting we now adopt will have the effect of excluding from the returns many trifling cases of larcenies and common assaults." This note explained the means whereby the supposed diminution was made apparent. And what was the difference thus made? Why, in July, 1836, the number committed was stated as 509, while in the month previous the number was 1,864; and it was because the system had been changed, that the whole difference arose. Such was the return made on the motion of the noble Lord, the Secretary for Ireland, on the 17th of April, 1837. There was, however, one still more curious return moved for in the July after; and that was a return of the outrages committed during the month of June, 1837, and contrasting them with the outrages of June, 1836, the very first month in which the new system was adopted; and on that contrast there appeared just the same discrepancy, the number in 1837 being 509, and that of 1836 being 1,864. He had also found another paper of a similar kind; and indeed there was not any return either laid before Parliament officially by the Government or obtained on the motion of any hon. Member, with regard to outrages in Ireland, that he could find that this extraordinary delusion did not go through. He held one in his hand which had been laid on the Table by the Government, and it was a return which contrasted the outrages in the months of November and December in 1835, 1836, and 1837; and there again the same disparity of numbers appeared. In November, 1836, it stated the number of offenders to have been 679, while for November, 1835, while the old system was in force, the number was set down at 1,764—just the same proportion as Colonel Shaw Kennedy stated the numbers were when he made the change. Now, when that came to be explained, when this disproportion was found to occur at the moment of the change, not only did the sum total vary from 509 to 1,864, but there was a difference in the amount of common assaults, the number of which were returned in 1836 at about 500, while in 1835, the previous year, they were 933. Now, the noble Lord must see, that but for the change in the system of making the returns, there was not the slightest diminution of crime between the five months of 1834, during the administration of Lord Wellesley, when the Coercion Bill was proposed, and the five months which had been chosen by the noble Lord, for instead of the numbers being, as they now appeared, 5,837, the return ought to have been, in 1835, 9,047. The apparent diminution of crime in the ratio of one to three, which appeared in the returns which had been produced by the noble Lord, was owing to a change which had been introduced into the system of sending in those returns. Not the smallest reliance could be placed, on that account, in the recent returns, as exhibiting a diminution in the number of outrages. Colonel Shaw Kennedy explained that these returns were called for the moment the change of system occurred. He had taken the trouble of comparing the number of disturbances for a period of eighteen months, which he had divided into three periods of six months each. The result was this:—During the last six months of 1836, the aggregate of crimes in the nature of agrarian outrages, was

843. During the first six months of 1837, the aggregate was 904. During the third period, which comprised the last five months only of 1837, the aggregate of crimes of the same description, was 1,086. He begged to ask, whether this was a diminution of crime? Was it not, on the contrary, a fearful increase? The next document to which he should refer, was a return of rewards offered by the Lord-lieutenant. From the returns for the years 1836 and 1837, it appeared that the aggregate amount of rewards offered during those two years for the discovery of murders was not fewer than 519; and the remarkable fact also appeared that, of these 519 rewards the odd nineteen only were claimed. The sums thus offered in the shape of rewards amounted to 24,830*l.*; and the sum claimed was only 1,050*l.* With regard to 1838, he had already stated, that the noble Lord had not given him the advantage of referring to perfect returns. He could, therefore, only speak from general information. Nevertheless, his own private sources of information were considerable; and he had been in communication with well-informed friends in different parts of the country. Their communications were quite sufficient to satisfy his mind that there had been no diminution of crime. He had accurate information of no fewer than 114 murders, with minute particulars, which had taken place in different parts of Ireland during the year 1838, and he verily believed, that he had not received an account of one-half the murders which had actually taken place. In the North Riding of the county of Tipperary, he was enabled to state, upon the authority of the most respectable magistrates, that during the year 1838 the outrages of an insurgent character amounted to 265. In both ridings, during one month, the offences of this description alone amounted to 161. From similar authority he had ascertained that no fewer than twenty murders had occurred in the county of Tipperary alone during the last six months, and twenty-seven attempts to commit murder during the same period. At the last special commission there appeared no fewer than thirteen cases of murder, three of premeditated assassination; and no fewer than 178 persons were committed to prison charged with homicide. Some letters which he had received from a Westmeath magistrate gave an account of the state of crime in that county, beginning with the 28th of November last. The right hon. Gentleman then read the following extracts, and stated that he felt it to be proper to omit some of the names contained in the original communications; but that he should be ready to mention them (if called upon) to the Secretary for Ireland. Extract of a letter dated Feb. 18, 1839:—

"On the 28th of November, 1838, Patrick Wood was fired at with intent to murder him; on the 5th of December, 1838, Robert Brabazon was murdered; on the 24th of December John Boland, the bailiff of Mr. Ennis, was shot dead at his own door; on the 20th of December Patrick Ruby was murdered near Ballynalch, and thrown into a ditch; on the 2nd of February, John Alexander was murdered near Killenan. A statement is before me of the names of certain men who met to arrange the murder of —— in the event of his ejecting some tenants from his lands. About three weeks since a threatening notice was addressed to Mr. Robinson, and another to Sir F. Hopkins. Copy—'Sir Francis Hopkins, there did a man come to look for you with a brace of pistols to shoot you, and if you do not be lighter on your tenants than what you are, you shall be surely shot, so now we give you timely notice, and if you don't abide by this, mark the consequence.' The following threatening notice was addressed to Mr. Thomas Gibson—'Sir, we take this opportunity of writing to you, as it is our wish to live friends with you, as we have done heretofore, unless you act contrary to our request, which is as follows—we request you'll put away Patrick Doyle and give him no further employment, as the people in giniril does not approve of him. Therefore we request you draw off your stock till you find a person of good character and agreeable to the neighbours, and was it not for your giniril character, we would not trouble ourselves writing to you till we'd cause you to sustain a considerable loss. We hope you'll not put us to the trouble of writing again, or in a word proceed to any severity, which will be the result unless you comply. Choose for yourself, to have us your steady friends or inviterate foes.' 'Mr. Garratt Hope,—Take notice, that if you take in possession John Dowling or Tim Cassidy Land you will meet with a sudden death.' February 11.—I am sorry to inform you that the Riband system has commenced its operations in this neighbourhood. A tenant of mine had his arms taken on Saturday evening. Four men armed entered his house about 7 o'clock. Two of them presented their guns at his breast, while the others possessed themselves of his yeomanry gun and bayonet. Eight of the party remained without, and fired several shots on leaving the place. 'To Mr. Thomas Gibson. Sir,—We wrote to you already, requesting you'd put Doyle away, but, contrary to our expectation, you bid us defiance, which causes us to write to you again before we'd take any proceedings against you, or in other language, execute vengeance. I say the tempest is gathering, and the thunder rolls over your devoted head, whilst the lightning is ready to blast you unless you instantly comply with our request. Perhaps you may seem astray for the reason of our demand, but the reason is, Doyle earned it long ago when he executed every thing tyrant Briscoe required. We would not wish to injure you, but should you refuse to comply, you may expect the severest punishment can be inflicted on mortal man. We are ready to meet you as friends or foes.' 'Mr. Thomas Gibson,—This is the third writing to you, and we see it is of no use; but this is the last. We did not think you would put us to this trouble, but since you did not put Doyle away, we will take other proceedings. This is the last advice to you, and I hope you will take it. Get quit of Doyle, or if not we will visit you and him.' February 17th, 1839. Mr. —— happened to open his hall door a few days since, and found the following notice, which had been placed under the knocker:—'Take notice, if you part with Andrew Carey you may mark the consequence.' Carey was a herd, and Mr. —— had intimated his intention of parting with him. He did subsequently part with him, and he has, in consequence, been obliged to take the sheep home from the farm in which they had grazed, as he could not get another person to take Carey's place. February 21, 1839.—I would have answered your letter sooner, but waited till I was able to take the informations on oath of ——; this I did yesterday, and that part of his examination which has reference to your friend Mr. U. —— is as follows:—'A. C., now a prisoner in Trim gaol, charged with snapping a pistol at ——, with intent to shoot him, having confessed to deponent his having done so, surrendered the pistol to him. He further stated, that he was solicited by two men who came to him from Mullingar to shoot Mr. U. ——, but he refused. Mr. —— also stated, that another man informed him that he had been in like manner solicited and refused.'"

With regard to the county of Longford, he would detail to the House some outrages which had taken place on the estate of Viscount Lorton, than whom, however maligned by the Irish radical journals and in the Precursor Society of Ireland, there was no more estimable landlord in that country. The noble Viscount's estate comprised several townlands, varying in extent from fifty to one hundred acres each, and it was, for the most part, originally let on leases for lives or years, made to one or two, but at the most three tenants upon each townland. Pending the existence of the leases upon certain parts of the estate, the original and immediate tenants (or their successor) from time to time cut up and sub-let to their sons and daughters (as marriage portions), to their grandchildren, friends, and relatives, and very often to strangers (on small fines), patches or portions of the lands contained in the original lease (a system, unfortunately for Ireland, too prevalent), so, that after some years, the ground became covered with paupers, too numerous for it to support. In such a condition was part of this estate found at the expiration of certain of the leases, and Lord Lorton, upon being made acquainted with the facts, and the wretched condition of the property and people, directed, that measures should be taken to improve the condition of both, and to make liberal allowances of money when requisite. This desirable object could not be attained but by making a pretty general clearance of the miserable people who had, from time to time, encroached and reared up huts upon the land, by enlarging the holdings, and placing upon them persons well versed in agricultural pursuits, possessed of some capital, and of habits of industry; and as a good deal of the soil was peculiarly adapted for the growth of flax, it was also his Lordship's wish that it should be cultivated, looms provided for such of the tenantry as might be disposed to use them, and, in fact, a totally different aspect given to the entire property and inhabitants. In the month of May, 1835, the agent went to the place with a view to commence the carrying out of his Lordship's wishes. The tenants were called together: the immediate descendants of the lessees, as well as the under-tenants or paupers, in many instances admitted the wretchedness of their condition (which was but too apparent), and their inability to improve. A selection was then made from the general body, and some of the persons then found upon the lands were suffered to remain in enjoyment of their holdings, thereby giving them a chance of becoming good and solvent tenants, and encouragement was held out to them to better their condition, and be of good and steady character and conduct. Such of them as were found to be totally unable to cultivate the soil, were required to give up possession of their holdings, and at the same time were informed, that they would on clearing out, receive sufficient money to pay their passage to America, or any country they might remove to. A large number of the pauper families were in this way necessarily removed, otherwise they would have starved each other. The first of the townlands upon which the arrangements were commenced was Crealoghter, and the first new tenant chosen for a holding upon it was John Brock, a native of Downshire, a man of capital, first-rate character, of most industrious habits, well acquainted with agricultural pursuits, the growth and management of flax, &c. In fact, so desirable a tenant could rarely be procured, or one, from his knowledge and habits so likely to be of use and advantage to the surrounding tenants. Brock entered upon his farm in May, 1835, perfectly unoffending to his neighbours, and only setting them a good example of farming. He was, however, not suffered to live long in his new holding, for on the 24th of June following he was most barbarously murdered in a field behind his own dwelling-house, at half-past six in the evening. The farm overlooked the village of Ballinamuck, and is within less than a quarter of a mile of it. The murderers, after perpetrating the foul deed, ran across the fields in the direction of the town; many of the inhabitants were out, and must have seen them. The widow, when running to the police-station, screamed as she passed along to the village, pointing out, that there were the murderers of her husband, but she was refused the slightest commiseration or assistance, without remark, more than as described by herself afterward on the trial—"They scoffed at me as I passed along." Brock was a Protestant, and no conviction was had, owing to the organised system of combination among the inhabitants of that country. After Brock's murder, his widow was removed, and a pension settled on her for life by Lord Lorton. The farm was again let to a man named Diamond, possessing many of the good qualities of Brock. He settled there with his little family, but his life was soon attempted. He was twice attacked going from the village to his own house. The last and most dangerous of these attacks (and which has rendered the poor man unfit for the use of any exertion during his life) was on the 20th of March, 1836, soon after he had settled. He received eight severe wounds in his side and body, supposed to be inflicted with a bayonet, and a severe fracture in his skull. Diamond still lives, but was quite disabled. There was another new tenant of the same class chosen for the second division of the townland of Crealoghter—Alexander Moorehead, in the month of January, 1837. His stock of cattle, consisting of cows and heifers, were driven by night from the farm to the adjoining county (Leitrim) killed, skinned, and tumbled into bogholes, where they were afterwards found. No trace, whatever was found of the offenders. Moorehead was a Protestant. Upon the townland of Shanmulla there was a new tenant chosen from his excellent character and good qualities, named Cole. He was placed upon the farm in March, 1836. On his way to a fair, to purchase stock in the very next month, April, he was attacked before he had proceeded far on his journey by an armed party, stabbed, and beaten in a most savage manner, so much so that his life was, for a long time, despaired of. Cole was a Protestant. No trace whatever was found of the offenders. On the townland of Fardroman, as to which some new arrangements had been made (but the majority of the old occupiers left in possession of their holdings), Arthur Cathcart, a tenant, and his Lordship's bailiff, was three times fired at, and ultimately shot dead near his own dwelling. He was fired at when returning home at 7 o'clock in the evening of the 16th of August, 1835; again on the 29th of December, same year, about the same place. He saw the men, on both occasions, running through the fields, well armed, three in number. Cathcart escaped unhurt so far. He was, however, again fired at on the 5th of October, 1837, on his return to his house, and severely wounded; with great care and attention he was nearly recovered of his wounds, but the determination was to put an end to him, and he was again attacked in the month of February, 1838, and shot dead near his own house. Cathcart was a Protestant, and had assisted the agent in making the new arrangements on the estate. No trace of his murderers, or of those who had previously fired at him. On the same townland of Fardroman, there were placed two other men as tenants, chosen for the same reasons as before mentioned—Rollins and Diamond; they were also destined to share a portion of the vengeance of these villains. On the night of the 18th of December, 1835, two heifers and a cow belonging to Diamond, were taken from his farm to the adjoining county and killed; on the night of the 3rd of March, 1836, three cows, one heifer, and a colt belonging to Rollins were taken from his land, and next day, on search being made, were found dead, skinned, and in bog-holes at some distance from his place. Rollins and Diamond were both Protestants. No trace of the perpetrators of these outrages. On the townland of Derrygee, where some changes were made, there was placed another tenant of the class before alluded to—Hugh Moorehead. He got possession in May, 1836. In the month of February, 1838, an armed party entered his dwelling, as he was sitting round the fire in the evening, with his little family, and gave him with guns and bayonets several mortal wounds, from which he shortly afterwards died. Moorehead was a Protestant. No conviction of the murderers. The last outrage upon Lord Lorton's tenants was upon the evening of the 16th of October, 1838, when an armed party attacked William Morrison, who succeeded Cathcart as bailiff to the estate, and murdered him in a house into which he had gone, as is supposed, to take some refreshment, just at the end of the town of Drumlish, the market of which place he had that day been attending. Drumlish is about two miles from Ballinamuck. Morrison was a Protestant. Would the House allow him to read the evidence given by the widow of Moorehead, the man who was murdered on Lord Lorton's estate? That evidence was given at the Assizes only a few days since. It was as follows:—

"Eliza Moorehead was then called up. She was a young and rather interesting looking woman, decently dressed. On being sworn, she said—I am the widow of the late Hugh Moorehead; we lived in Derrygee, near Ballinamuck, in March, 1838; on the 14th of that month, about 8 o'clock in the evening, I was at home with my husband and family, which consisted of two servant men, two girls, and my child, about five weeks old; at the hour I mentioned we were at our supper, when the latch was raised, and five or six men walked in; the first thing they did was to run up and strike my husband with a but-end of a gun; there was not one word said till he was struck and knocked down; there was a candle lighting in a long candlestick on the floor at the time they came in; when they knocked my husband down they asked for his arms; I said he had none in the house, that his gun was at the armourer's in Longford; they then struck him a second time, and immediately afterwards went up to the room; I saw with the men who came in, two guns, a pistol, and a pitchfork; the candle went out, and one man came and lighted one candle first, and lighted another afterwards; other candles were lighted by other persons; when my husband was knocked down on the floor, I sat down beside him; the party came and asked him for his pistols, and he said they were at his uncle Harriss's, in Rhine; they then asked me was there any powder and shot, and I said there was some in a teacup in the wallcove, and they went up and got it; one of them said, they should have the gun or something else, as they knew it was in the house; the same person then took a creel and stood on it, saying to the persons who were with him, 'Put me up on the loft till I search;' they did not put him up on the loft, but he looked upon it, and then came down; the party did no more then but consult together at the room door, till they fired two shots; one of the shots struck my husband in the knee, and the other in the side; I did not see who fired the shot, for I had my husband's head down in my lap, and I striving to cover him, when I saw the muzzle of the gun over my shoulder; he was removed to the infirmary next day, and died on the 30th of the month; the prisoner at the bar is one of the party who came to my house that night; it was he who lighted the candle first, and stood up on the creel to look on the loft."

Could any man deny, that he had altogether exhibited the most conclusive evidence of the existence of the most fearful combination in Ireland, against the rights of property and the due administration of justice? He would refer to the circumstances of one particular case in order to corroborate the statement he had made. It was a case which was already well known to the House, and which had lately filled the public mind—he meant the atrocious murder of Lord Norbury. It was not necessary that he should refer to the particular deed itself, for the circumstances immediately connected with it were well known. What he contended for was, that this was no isolated outrage, no ordinary murder, that it was not the act of any single assassin, but that it was clearly the result of that spirit of confederation and combination in the commission of crime against the rights of property to which he had already adverted. It was admitted upon all hands, that a more inoffensive, more benevolent, or more useful man did not reside in Ireland than Lord Norbury; and, in corroboration of that fact, he would read a short extract:—

"When Lord Norbury's body had been laid

in the grave, the rev. Mr. Rafferty, parish priest of Tullamore, addressed the assembled meeting, and said, 'I have known this illustrious nobleman in private and in public; his life has been spent in acts of charity, kindness, and liberality, and every one here must feel and mourn his loss as he would that of his father, benefactor, and friend. No one act of his life was calculated to give offence, and, in managing his estate, every act of his was necessary and just. Nay, he would not say one unkind word, much less do any unkind act, towards any one."

Such was the testimony borne to his character by the Roman Catholic clergyman of his own parish; yet that inoffensive man, upon whom the encomium he had just read had been passed, was shot upon his own domain, within sight of his house and family, and of which deed no trace had been discovered to the present day. It might be said, that chance or some peculiar degree of cunning might have favoured the escape of the murderer, and that a feeling of sympathy and sorrow had been universally evinced at the act. He regretted to say, the very reverse was the fact. Lord Charleville, who had received the first information of Lord Norbury's death, but who thought it might have been accidental, stated, that on his way to Tullamore, the nearest town to Durrow Abbey, the seat of Lord Norbury, whither he was hastily repairing, crowds were collected, who groaned at him on his approach, and in a voice and spirit of exultation cried out, "He is dead! he is dead!" From this circumstance Lord Charleville immediately suspected the fact, and turning to the gentleman who accompanied him, said, "Depend upon it Lord Norbury has been murdered." He held in his hand the informations of a person named Watson, which were taken in Tullamore shortly after the murder, in which it was stated, that the informant was in a public-house the night of the day upon which the murder was committed; that while there two men entered, one of them carrying a double-barrelled gun; that they called for liquor; that the first of them who got his glass drank the following toast, "May the man who shot Lord Norbury never lose a finger;" and that the second man drunk "Long life to him who had the courage to shoot a monster of the kind." These were sworn depositions, and required no commentary from him. Another person had sworn, that on the 3d of January, while sitting in the house of a person named Coway, Mrs. Coway and a boy named Kent being present, a stranger entered in the dark, and asked for lodging; that they were talking about the murder at the time, and that this stranger observed, "The Devil's luck to Lord Glandine; he earned and deserved his fate." But he had other facts which brought the matter much nearer home. He came to the family and relations of the deceased nobleman, speaking their feelings under the sad bereavement they had met with in his death. The right hon. Gentleman then read a letter from Mr. Stuart, the son in law of Lord Norbury, in which he stated, that he had been obliged to make an application to have a police force stationed at the house; that at the time of the dreadful occurrence he was unwilling to excite those feelings which he knew the stationing of police was calculated to do; but that, finding the house attacked for arms, he felt he would be incurring a greater responsibility if he any longer abstained from doing so, adding, "that the last sad crime followed by so many outrages in the neighbourhood, rendered such a step absolutely necessary for their personal safety." They might judge of the state of the neighbourhood from intimidation on the part of the people, when Mr. Stuart told them in that letter, that a respectable Roman Catholic farmer on the estate told him, that "He hoped to God he would not say he had been speaking to him (Mr. Stuart), for that it would be as much as his life was worth if he were to be seen speaking to one of the family." Mr. Stuart likewise stated, that Mr. Garrey, Lord Norbury's agent, had been put upon his guard by information which stated, that a person had been heard to say, "Lord Norbury is gone, but that's no good until Garrey is also killed." He had seen and communicated with Mr. Garrey on the subject, and he had permitted him to make use of the information he had received from him. He had put into his hand copies of documents relating to himself. The first of them went to show, that this murder, which it was attempted to explain away as a mere insulated case, had been the result of a long-formed conspiracy. Some months previous to the murder Mr. Garrey received the following letter:—

"Sir,—You are unknown to me unless by your character, but the duty I owe to my neighbour induces me to warn you of a matter which I have learned from an authentic source. It is this: there is a conspiracy laid to take your life, and a short time since, on your return from Nenagh, where I believe you dined, the assassins were in wait for you, and two of them actually missed fire at you, although, perhaps, the speed at which you drove prevented you from hearing it. Now, Sir, as you value your life, do not for God's sake be out at night, or alone, at any time. I know from others you are a brave man, but do not rashly expose yourself. You have a wife and family. In conclusion, I assure you, that I would sign my name to this, if I was not prevented by a concern for the person who gave me information on this matter, that I might let you know it."

Mr. Garrey, in reference to this letter, said—

"It is more than probable, that it saved my life, for having occasion to go to Nenagh two days after receiving it, being detained till late, I thought, recollecting it, that it might be more prudent to sleep there. I have every reason to believe, that that night a gang of seven ruffians waited for some hours on the road by which I was likely to return home, for the purpose of murdering me, and two of them were actually taken up by the police patrol on their return home that night."

The following is an extract of a letter from a Government officer to Mr. Garrey, by desire of Mr. Drummond:—

"Clonmel, 18th of January, 1839.

"I have only time to say I have received private information which, without going into particulars, makes it necessary for me to inform you of a conspiracy to assassinate you."

He would also read an extract of another letter from a police-officer, dated 5th of February, 1839:—

"I hasten to apprise you, that a person came some distance to inform me that he had heard two men conspiring to take away your life. I need hardly warn you to be careful of yourself."

What was the result of all this? Why, that Mr. Garrey had been driven from that part of the country. He was, as had been said, a brave man. He had been an officer in the navy, and was wounded severely. He was sure he would not fear to face the cannon's mouth; but could any individual who led a life of continual apprehension of being shot at from behind a ditch or wall, not dread the danger of being murdered? Mr. Garrey had handed him a most extraordinary document, given him, he said, by a poor man in the neighbourhood, who told him at the same time, that several of them had been in circulation before Lord Norbury's murder. It was the speech of Robert Emmett on his trial before Lord Norbury, the late nobleman's father, who was spoken of in this document in the most opprobrious manner; so much so that he would not venture to read it to the House. Yet that speech, made thirty-six years ago, and published in Paris in 1835, was circulated in Lord Norbury's neighbourhood for some months before his death. What did he infer from all this? Why, that that murder was the result of that conspiracy and confederation, the existence of which throughout the country was denied. What had Mr. Garrey said upon the subject? Was not he an authority upon that point? And what was the opinion of various land agents throughout the country? Why, they agreed with him in saying, that that system of combination, fear, and outrage, which had existed for the last century under various names, such as Whitefeet, Rockites, Terryalts, &c., still continued, and was never in greater force in Ireland than at the present period. If the papers for which he asked were granted, he should be able to establish the fact, that Ribandism still flourished in that country. He had much information on the subject, but he knew that the Government had much more. In the returns made under Lord Wellesley's government, and up to 1835, there always had been a column to distinguish Ribandism from other crimes, but since that period that column had always been suppressed. He had received many authorised documents on the subject from various parts of the country. The name of Lord Hawarden had just been mentioned to him, a most worthy and excellent man, who had narrowly escaped in returning from the Clonmel assizes falling a victim to that system. He could mention the names of many individuals who had fallen victims to it, if it were necessary. He heard the observation of an hon. Member on the other side of the House. He could assure him that he did not want another coercion bill for Ireland; but what he did want, and what he had a right to demand, was, that the existing laws should be vigorously administered in Ireland, in order that some security might be had for life and property. If he were asked what he believed to be the principal cause from which emanated this spirit of combination, violence, and outrage throughout the country, he would answer, in the words of Lord Wellesley, that he believed it to be "agitation," continually employed to disturb and distract the minds of the people, and excite in them a hatred for every institution of law and government in the country. He could really fatigue the House were he to enumerate all the cases of violence and atrocity which had been proved to arise from the system of political agitation in Ireland. He saw, that the hon. and learned Member for Dublin cheered that observation. He would, therefore, trouble the House with an extract or two upon the subject. He found, that in one of those societies which had been disturbing the peace of Ireland as long as he recollected, and much longer—that in the Precursor Society, on the 18th of last month, the hon. and learned Gentleman, referring to the county of Tipperary, said,—

> "They have sent a large sum of money to the Precursors; yes, the brave, the patriotic, the manly, and the spirited people of Tipperary, have nobly done their duty to the country."

The acts he had referred to were the "noble acts of duty," with every one of which the hon. and learned Gentleman was perfectly acquainted; in proof of which he would read what the hon. and learned Gentleman said immediately after, in reference to one of them, and in extenuation of the crime:—

> "I regret to say, that there has been a crime committed which makes the blood chill in one's veins to think of; but let it be remembered, that the murderers of Cooper and Weyland had been deprived of their land by the landlord."

Was that language to address to this brave and spirited people? He would likewise read an extract from the hon. and learned Gentleman's speech, which would show in another point of view how the system of agitation affected the minds of the people and led them to acts of outrage. After commenting upon Lord Oxmantown's speech shortly after the murder of Lord Norbury, he said—

> "Ah, Sir, Lord Oxmantown ought to be cautious on such a subject, for the people know how he has an estate. The method was the extermination of the people, the clearing of parishes, the rooting out the inhabitants, both males and females, until all were annihilated; not the killing of one, two, or three persons, when their relations might succeed them. There was not an acre of his estate which was not purchased in that way. To be sure his family had possessed them for centuries; but it was a part of Irish history that that was the way they got them. But the idea of killing one man to get at an estate —the man who could make such an assertion ought to be placed by the interposition of his friends within the custody of the law, and the Lord Chancellor should appoint him a custodee of his court. Why, I say, that the assassination which he speaks of is provoked by such language. If he wanted to tempt to those deeds which he speaks of, with such execration, he could best have done so by the use of such language. The murderer who committed the crime is culpable; but the man who uses language calculated to provoke the commission of such a crime is still more culpable. Such language is a palliation for the crime. How dare he speak of the Catholic peasantry of Ireland in the manner he has done? He talks of them as of a band of assassins. Why, the fact, that he lives shows that they are not so."

When the hon. and learned Gentleman said this, did he even pretend to believe, that in Ireland there were no assassins who could misinterpret or misapply such language, men who gloried in their calling, and who knew no other justice than what the hon. and learned Gentleman termed, himself "the wild justice of revenge?" Had not Mr. Baker, Mr. Cooper, Mr. Weyland, Mr. O'Keeffe, Mr. Brabazon, and Lord Norbury, lately fallen by the hands of assassins? Did not the blood of Ferguson, of Whitty, of Going, of the venerable Heuston, all peaceful ministers of God, yet cry to Heaven unavenged? And were there no assassins, then, to whom these words might possibly convey a hint? But he hastened to close this long, and he feared tedious statement, by merely glancing at the part the Government had borne in respect to the present unhappy and distracted state of Ireland. Had the whole tenour of their conduct been rather to discountenance or to encourage the system of agitation and its inevitable consequence of combination, violence, and outrage? Had they not, by the indiscriminate and wholesale exercise of the prerogative of mercy, shaken the foundation of justice? Had they not slighted the judges and offended the magistracy? And when the resident gentry, struggling to preserve their properties and their lives, amidst difficulties the most trying, and dangers the most imminent, had not the Government taken that most infelicitous opportunity to insinuate, that their duties as landlords had been neglected, and thereby stimulated the deluded populace against them? But he should return to the question of Ribandism, which he had just now undertaken to show that it still existed and flourished in Ireland. He would now read an extract from depositions taken on the 9th of February, 1839.

"The deponent states, that he is a member of the Riband Society; that it consists of county delegates, parish delegates, treasurer, body-master, committee men, and common members. He states how they are chosen; that the county delegates meet quarterly in large towns for the purpose of giving renewals of passwords, signs, &c. At the parish meetings members are admitted and sworn. The oath, amongst other things, binds the member to keep secret whatever he may see or hear, to be loyal and true to each brother, to fight for each other to death, especially against Protestants or heretics, or any man who may oppose his religion. He is not to discover or give any information against a brother; he is to hold himself ready to rise in defence of his religion when called upon. It appears, also, that, at their meetings, orders are issued by the committee for the beating, carding, or other punishment of any person who may have rendered himself obnoxious in any way; such as by taking land from which any member has been ejected; voting at an election against the candidate the society favours, giving evidence, &c.; and, for the purpose of punishment, people from a different neighbourhood are appointed, in order that they may not be known, and a person of the neighbourhood to point out their victim. The pass-warrant is written with contractions, so that none but the initiated can read it, and the pass-words are changed quarterly. The deponent states the names and addresses of various persons well known."

The pass-warrant of this society he had received only two days ago; he found, on comparison, that it corresponded word for word with that read at a trial in Drogheda two months ago. There had been a denial of the contents of any such document. All he demanded was, that the papers should be laid before the House without names of persons or places. He demanded no information as to names. Papers without names the Government might safely give; but if they refused those, and attempted to blink the question, they would never get at the root of the evil. It was for him to show that the outrages continued, and had practically been encouraged by the Government. It was for them to prove that it was not so. The Government encouraged agitation, rather than discouraged it. The whole exercise of the prerogative of mercy in Ireland was for the purpose of defeating the ends of substantial justice. The Government had slighted the judges, they had offended the magistracy, they had alarmed the resident gentry, struggling as they were for their property and their lives; and in the midst of these dangers and difficulties, they had taken the infelicitous opportunity of appointing to the office of Lord-lieutenant a noble viscount who had, in his place in that House, declared himself favourable to the war then going on against the established church in Ireland. The especial objects of the patronage of Government were the very members and leaders of that general association, who were regarded, and, as he conceived, justly regarded, to be amongst the most active causes of the present state of Ireland. One striking instance presented itself to him that night, on the other side of the House, in the person of an hon. and learned Gentleman just returned to Parliament, whose professional character and talent stood in no need of praise from him. That hon. and learned Gentleman had been transferred from the association to which he had been the law adviser, to become the law adviser of the Government on the proceedings which they might have to institute against persons transgressing, or supposed to have transgressed the law. Up to the year 1834, many members of the present Government, by themselves, and through the mouth of their sovereign, denounced agitation, and stigmatised the agitators in Ireland. From thenceforward, had not those same ministers courted agitation, and become the patrons and familiar companions of the agitators? Were not members of the very associations the Government had formerly described as treasonable, and the noisiest agitators promoted to important offices of trust and emolument, in the magistracy, the police, and the courts of law? He had meant to refer to some of these appointments, but he felt that the climax had been reached by the recent nomination of a nobleman, who, though most estimable in all the relations of private life, was yet the publicly avowed enemy of the Established Church in Ireland, sent there as the representative of her Majesty, whose solemn, sacred, and sworn duty it was to uphold that Establishment; and the avowed public supporter of those whom his own colleagues had denounced as the habitual disturbers of the public peace, was sent to govern and tranquillize that country. In short, the patronage of Ireland, instead of being employed to promote the public service, had notoriously been bartered for votes numbered in that House; and whatever might be the individual inclination of the Members of her Majesty's Government, if they were not aware, they were the only persons in the country who were ignorant, that if they boldly discouraged agitation and enforced the law against the agitators of Ireland, their political existence could not be worth an hour's purchase. From Ministers, then, who had not the power, even if they had the will, to help them, the faithful and well affected subjects of the Queen in Ireland must turn to the Sovereign and the British public. The peaceable people of Ireland, anxious to fulfil the relative duties of their stations, must either incur the odium of absenteeism on the one hand, or be residents at the peril of their lives and the certain forfeit of the peace and happiness of themselves and their families on the other, they desired the protection of the law, but they found a lawless confederacy more powerful than the law, and armed with a dark and mysterious power to enforce its unlawful and cruel mandates. The violator of the law was secure of impunity, while the man who would lift his hand or voice against the tyranny of that despotic code was doomed to inevitable destruction. The murderer was toasted as a hero. The honest witness to the truth in a court of justice persecuted to the death. It was in sorrow that he had to bear testimony against his own country; all their interests are identified; he must suffer with its adversity, and could only prosper if it was prosperous. In common, then, with the faithful and allegiant subjects of the Crown of every class and creed in Ireland, he made that solemn appeal to the sympathies of this country. He earnestly implored a brave, a generous, and an upright people to consider, before it was too late, the sufferings, the shame, and the sorrows of a sister country, violated with outrage, defiled with the innocent blood of her own children, and crying aloud to them for succour. He besought them in the name of truth, of justice, of humanity, and of the God of mercy, without whom they knew—and it was their first consolation—a hair of their head could not suffer, nor a sparrow fall to the ground. Still let them not be deaf to their entreaties until that unhappy country ceased to be habitable, and was blotted out from among the civilized nations of the earth. The right hon. Gentleman concluded by moving for "Returns of all outrages, crimes, and offences, distinguishing the several kinds and descriptions which have occurred in the several counties, cities, and towns in Ireland, in each month of the respective years 1835, 1836, 1837, 1838, 1839, to the time of making such a return, showing the sum total of each description of outrage, crime and offence committed in each county, city, and town in each month; showing also the total in each county, city, and town, in each month, and in each of the said years; showing also the number of persons concerned in each outrage, crime, or offence, so far as the same can be ascertained, and a variety of papers illustrative of the moral condition of Ireland.

Mr. *O'Connell* wished to move an amendment in the way of an addition to the motion of the right hon. Gentleman with the view of obtaining some further information—more comprehensive returns than those which should be made under his motion. He wished for returns of the same nature and for the same period as regarded England and Wales, and he desired to learn, from the authority of the Chair, the proper time in point of order for submitting such an amendment.

Mr. *Shaw* said, he could have no objection to his motion being extended, as the hon. and learned Member for Dublin proposed.

The question was put on the motion for the first named return.

Viscount *Morpeth* said, it certainly was matter of some satisfaction to him, upon whom unavoidably so large a share of responsibility connected with the subjects treated of in the motion and speech of the right hon. Gentleman, the Member for Dublin University, devolved; and he conceived, also, that it must be something of relief to the excited apprehensions of the country, to find, that the long and repeatedly threatened explosion which was to overwhelm the Irish Government with shame, confusion, and ruin—

which was to lay bare to the astonished country the extent and aggravated nature of the misdeeds of that Government, and which was to visit them with such tremendous retribution, had at last issued—in proceedings of impeachment? Not at all.—In a vote of censure? Nothing in the least like it.—In an address for their removal from office? Least of all things that.—In a declaratory resolution recommending a different line of politics? No, not even that, but in a motion for the production of papers. He would call upon all present to witness what had been the daily and nightly strain of persons who were opposed to the Government, at public meetings, at corporation meetings, at meetings for festive celebrations, in the columns of the press, within the walls of Parliament itself, whether it had not been of all law trampled under foot, of property and life left wholly unguarded, of the Church in danger, of the Throne menaced, of Protestantism at its last gasp, and all these had produced a vote for the production of papers. While the late Lord-lieutenant of Ireland, the Marquess of Normanby, was waiting, before he could well apply himself to the colonial affairs of this country, for the proceedings by impeachment, of which he had been repeatedly declared to be deserving; while Lord Ebrington was waiting for the address for the cancelling of his appointment, which the speech he once made within the walls of that House of Parliament had been pronounced to render necessary, no proceedings with such objects were brought forward, but a vote only was proposed for the production of papers, which was granted every year as a mere matter of course. The right hon. Gentleman concluded his eloquent speech by saying that nothing remained for them but an application to Parliament, and then he came to this House with a vote for papers—anything but appeal to a distinct verdict of the House—anything but bring about a change in the policy of the Government, which it sometimes suited them to condemn with so much vehemence, but so little cost—anything than the faintest wish of dislodging the Members of the present Government from their seats, which hon. Gentlemen opposite would do anything, and endure anything, rather than take upon themselves to occupy. As to the motion made by the right hon. Gentleman, he should be exceedingly happy to give him as much, if not more than he asked for, although there might be one or two items or expressions in the long list which had been read, which, if they were persevered in, would render it necessary to produce some papers, which it would not be expedient for the public service and for the interests of justice to bring forward; but he did not apprehend any difficulty would exist between the right hon. Gentleman and himself on this point, and he should be glad not only to produce the papers, but to give every information in his power. He might take the liberty of moving, at a subsequent time, for certain returns in addition to those for which the motion had been already made, and which applied only to certain years. The present motion extended only to those years during which the Marquess of Normanby had conducted the administration of Ireland; but as he should be prepared to prove, that the comparison of those years with preceding years would be by no means disadvantageous to the Marquess of Normanby, or to the country, he should take the liberty of filling up the large preliminary void, which the right hon. Gentleman had left unoccupied. The speech of the right hon. Gentleman had branched into two chief points of argument—the one connected with the present state of disturbances and crime in Ireland, and the other to the conduct of the Government in reference to that subject; and in considering the topics to which the right hon. Gentleman had addressed himself, he should proceed first to that point which related to the state of crime and disturbances which at present existed in Ireland. He did not stand up there to deny, or to palliate, or to gloss over those crimes of which the right hon. Gentleman had made so forcible a representation. There were many, and, indeed, he might almost say, all of the statements made by the right hon. Gentleman, but too true and but too deplorable, and what was the worst part of the consideration was, that they were by no means new. If this were an unwonted and unprecedented outburst of crime which the right hon. Gentleman had brought under the consideration of the House, there might be more hope that it proceeded from temporary causes, and there would be more chance of applying a successful remedy. Perhaps the substitution of other measures and of other men might give rise to a better order of things;

and if he only thought that his removal from office would bring additional security to any one home-stead in Ireland—would still one shout of outrage—one shriek of suffering—would stay the up-raised arm of one assassin—or would divert one bullet from its murderous aim—he need hardly say with what pleasure he should receive the fiat which would remove him from its burthens. But what he was prepared to say was, that since the time at which the present Government had assumed office there had not been more, he might say there had been less, but he would content himself with saying, that there had been no more of insurrectionary violence or general crime than there had been within any other corresponding interval of time which the right hon. Gentleman might select for the last sixty years; and he would contend further, that through the whole of that space, outrages would be found to have proceeded from similar causes, to have been engendered in a similar state of society, and to have presented themselves in a similar manner with those which were now commented upon. He would make a rapid survey of the recent history of Ireland in respect to crime, which, in justice to the present Government, should be brought before the country, for the right hon. Gentleman had not said in express words that the state of affairs, in connection with crime, was worse now than during any previous period, although that was the inference which was wished to be drawn from the representations which had been brought forward this evening. He would state, what he was prepared to maintain, that for the last sixty years no corresponding interval of time could be fixed upon, more free from outrage and violence, than that which had elapsed from the period of the accession of the present Government to office. He believed that it was in 1761, that the first White-boy outrages were known, which, by the concurrent testimony of historians of that day, were known to have arisen from the inclosure of waste lands. It was said by a contemporary historian, "On the one hand, cruelties were perpetrated of which it might well be thought humanity was incapable, and on the other hand, Acts were passed for their punishment which seem calculated for the meridian of Barbary." In succeeding years, down to 1775, several of the White-boy Acts were passed, and then in 1786, that combination was succeeded by another, whose members were termed Rightboys, and it was stated by Lord Clare, in a speech delivered in the Irish House of Commons, "They prevented the payment of rents, and for years a landlord could not distrain a tenant, or set his land but according to the will of the Whiteboys. After these there came the Hearts of Steel, who, in Belfast, became so bold as to have attacked the gaol and rescued a prisoner, and to have committed other outrages. He need not go through the subsequent cases of violence which arose in 1791 and the subsequent years, when the association known by the name of the "United Irishmen," came into existence; nor need he now enter into the lamentable events attending the Rebellion which succeeded. In 1803 the outbreak occurred, during which Lord Kilwarden was assassinated; and in 1806, disturbances arose in Connaught against the priests' dues, and Chief-Justice Downes said in his charge to the special commission, that "Judges could not travel without a large military escort; the outrages did not partake of any political complexion, nor were they confined to any particular party or persuasion of the people." In 1807, the counties of Limerick and Kerry were dreadfully disturbed; and in 1811, a special commission was sent throughout Leinster and Munster, when Lord Guilliamore stated "The avowed object was, the regulation of landed property and its produce, to give a maximum of rent, prescribe the price of land, prevent the transfer of property, and enforce the observance of the laws of these mob legislators by torture and murder, in order that land should never rise, and property never change its possession. To all ranks were their mandates equally directed—to the rich and poor. To the gentleman of landed property they proclaimed that the land, which his ancestors had devised thirty or forty years before, must not rise on the expiration of his lease, or must only rise according to their arbitrary standard, although the price of every article around him had increased four-fold by a fluctuation of value which he could not control, yet the value of his land should remain stationary; and that if the former tenant were a beggar or a knave, he must be continued; that the land should remain unset, as in several instances it did, to the ruin of all concerned, as the landlord must submit to the terms thus arbitrarily dictated to him." In 1812 outbreaks in the same counties arose from the same causes, which afterwards extended to King's county and Westmeath; and in 1814, it was said in this House, by the right hon. Baronet, the Member for Tamworth, "The evil which it was now proposed to remedy had not, he was sorry to say, risen on a sudden; it had existed for a considerable time; indeed, he might say for the whole period he had the honour of forming a part of the Irish government." After detailing the proceedings of the Carders, he continued, "I examined into the cases of many individuals where personal torture had been inflicted, and I uniformly found it to proceed from some dispute relative to ground, either by giving a price exceeding that fixed on by those miscreants, or by taking a farm of which the late occupying tenant had been dispossessed by his landlord.*" In 1815, a special commission was sent to Limerick; and in that year the murder of the Dillon family took place, which the House had heard detailed with so much force and melancholy truth by the same right hon. Baronet. He also said, "The records of the courts of justice show, that such a settled and uniform system of guilt, such monstrous and horrible perjuries could not be found in the annals of any country on the face of the globe, whether civilized or uncivilized. Time alone, the prevalence of a kind and paternal government, the extension of education, were the remedies which must be chiefly relied upon." In 1820 an account was given by Mr. James Daly of the state of Galway, and he said,—

> "In a county which was for the most part destitute of manufactures, the population were almost entirely employed in the cultivation of the soil, and much of the existing distress had arisen from the large sums offered to landowners by tenants, by which the proprietors had unfortunately suffered themselves to be tempted, but which it was wholly beyond the means of the tenant to pay. The disturbances to which he had alluded commenced about the middle of November; renewed disturbances took place, in which some lives were lost, and a gentleman of respectability was shot by the road side in a public highway. The meeting of the magistrates was adjourned for a fortnight, and in that short interval, such was the increased audacity of the rebels, for he could designate them in no other manner, that upwards of seventy gentlemen's seats had been attacked and plundered, and there were actually not five seats in the whole district which had either not been entered, or defended and saved from depredation after an obstinate engagement. They attacked the police-barracks, and thirteen of the police were dangerously wounded in a desperate engagement, which lasted from half past nine in the evening till three in the morning. For above five hours was this band of rebels engaged with his Majesty's organized veteran troops. The country was studded so thickly with troops, that no man could stand at his door without seeing parties of soldiers.*"

In 1821, the counties of Cork, Kerry, and Limerick were in a state of almost insurrection, and in that year arose the formidable Captain Rock, and the party who took the name of Rockites. In 1822, Mr. Goulburn said, "In no county in Ireland was the police sufficient to protect the peaceable;" and in 1823, the same right hon. Gentleman again said, "Every feeling was in favour of the offender, and the only efforts made by the great portion of the people were to screen him from detection. Justice was defeated in every possible way. Where the criminal was secured, the witnesses for the Crown were either carried off on the approach of his trial, or such was the influence of terror, it was found impossible to induce them to give evidence." The quotations which he had already made, showed that most of the evils detailed by the right hon. Gentleman existed, and he thought it an aggravated form, during the time of all the preceding administrations, although the opponents of the Government in those days did not think it to be their duty carefully to collect an account of every crime which had been committed, and lay it before the country as the consequence of the conduct of that Government. In 1829, the right hon. Baronet, the Member for Tamworth, made a speech, in which he anticipated him (Viscount Morpeth) by making a summary of the course adopted by preceding administrations.

> "Let us cast" said the hon. Baronet" a rapid glance over the recent history of Ireland, trace it from the Union, the period when the retirement of Mr. Pitt from the King's Councils brought more prominently forward the differences of public men in regard to the Catholic question. What is the melancholy fact? That for scarcely one year during the period that has elapsed since the Union, has Ireland been governed

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* See Hansard, vol. xxviii pp. 163—165.

* Hansard, New Series, vol. ii p. 92.

by the ordinary course of law In 1800 we find the Habeas Corpus Act suspended, and the suppression of rebellion in force. In 1801 they were continued. In 1802, I believe, they expired. In 1803 the insurrection for which Emmett suffered, broke out; Lord Kilwarden was murdered by a savage mob; and both Acts of Parliament were renewed. In 1804 they were continued. In 1806 the west and south of Ireland were in a state of insubordination, which was with difficulty repressed by the severest enforcement of the ordinary law. In 1807, in consequence chiefly of the disorders that had prevailed in 1806, the Act called the Insurrection Act was introduced. It gave power to the Lord-lieutenant to place any district, by proclamation, out of the pale of the ordinary law—it suspended trial by jury—and made it a transportable offence to be out of doors from sunset to sunrise. In 1807 this Act continued in force, and in 1808, 1809, and to the close of the Session of 1810. In 1814 the Insurrection Act was renewed; it was continued in 1815, 1816 and 1817. In 1822 it was again revived, and continued during the years 1823, 1824, and 1825. In 1825 the temporary Act intended for the suppression of dangerous associations, and especially the Roman Catholic Association, was passed. It continued during 1826 and 1827, and expired in 1828. The year 1829 has arrived, and with it the demand for a new Act to suppress the Roman Catholic Association.*"

But he might be met with the remark, that although the country was in a most disturbed state during these periods, the Governments of the time had done their duty in coming to Parliament and asking for fresh powers. They had seen that all these Acts which had been obtained had occasionally ceased, and in 1829 and 1830 during the administration of the Duke of Northumberland in Ireland, (he would not trouble the House with many extracts, although he might bring a catalogue as long as that produced by the right hon. Gentleman), he would show to the House what proceedings had taken place during the time when the administration of the Duke of Wellington and the right hon. Baronet did not deem it necessary to apply to Parliament that new powers or extraordinary remedies should be placed in their hands.

"The house of a man named M'Gowan, in Carrigallon (county of Leitrim), was attacked in the middle of the day by a daring mob, who beat him in a violent manner, broke his windows and demolished an oven which he used in his trade as a baker. All this was done in the presence of hundreds of spectators, not one of whom interfered, and, more extraordinary still, within half a mile of a magistrate's residence, and in a town where there is a police station. The police were marched from the town that morning because there was a fair held there. This was on the principle of leaving a clear stage for the factious to fight it out. No wonder if the calendars are so much heavier now, seeing that the police, the only available witnesses in general, were sent out of the way on purpose to let the 'course of wild justice' have its way. One hundred and twelve prisoners have been committed to the county gaol in Clonmel in the course of one week."

He quoted these circumstances, in order to draw a contrast between the custom which existed then, and that which had been since introduced. He did not mean to say, that the Government really wished the factions to fight it out; but the police being withdrawn, that was the inevitable consequence. At the Cork Assizes for 1829, "the total number of prisoners for trial amounted to 210; of which there are for murder twenty-one, burglary and robbery sixteen, rape and abduction nine. Ninety-six prisoners for trial at Mayo, including eleven for murder. 123 prisoners for trial at Galway, of whom thirty-six are charged with murder."

"The following resolutions were unanimously adopted at a most numerous and respectable meeting of the magistrates of the county of Fermanagh, convened under the presidency of the Earl of Enniskillen, on the 30th July, 1829:—'The magistrates of the county of Fermanagh, assembled to take into consideration the state of their county, deeply lament the melancholy occurrences which have recently taken place in a part of it. Much misrepresentation has, no doubt, existed on the origin of these transactions; but, from the fullest inquiry which they have been enabled to make, it is the deliberate conviction of their minds, that a premeditated attack was made on the peaceable and unoffending Protestants, by well-organised, numerous and tumultuous assemblages from distant parts, well armed, and acting under regular control, and which appears to have been part of a system co-existing in different parts of this county and elsewhere, plotted by factious incendiaries." "In Queen's County, at the summer assizes of 1829 (July 31), Chief Justice Bushe addressed the Grand Jury at some length on the disturbed state of the county and weight of the calendar. He expressed much regret that its appearance proved the existence of a spirit of insubordination and insurrection greatly at variance with the state of a county which had been hitherto proverbial for the absence of crime of this description. The Whiteboy system has made dreadful progress in other parts of Ireland; and the utmost exertion was necessary to repress a system that would erect the dominion of the mob over that of the higher orders."

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* Hansard, New Series, vol. xx., p. 741—742.

He would now come to the state of Tipperary, the county about the disturbed state of which so much had been said and quoted. In the *Evening Mail*, of August 26, there was the following extract from a letter dated the 24th:—

" You can form no conception of the state in which this hitherto peaceable barony now is; all our lower windows built up, obliged to live in the upper rooms, and in momentary expectation of an attack. You are, doubtless, aware that Mr. Tydd Abbott's and Daniel Falkener's houses were robbed of their arms ten or twelve days since."

A meeting of seventy-five magistrates took place on September 7, 1829, at Thurles, when, on the motion of the Earl of Llandaff, they agreed to the following resolutions:—

" Resolved, That in consequence of the disturbances which have prevailed in this county for the last three years, several meetings of the magistrates have been held within that period for the purpose of considering the means best calculated to arrest their progress. That at these meetings it was resolved unanimously, that the means and powers afforded by the existing laws were insufficient, and that the state of the country was such as to call for the renewal and application of the Insurrection Act. That since the transmission of our last memorial, dated 20th October, 1827, on this subject, to the Lord-lieutenant, notwithstanding the rewards offered by his Excellency for the discovery and apprehension of offenders, and the united efforts of the magistrates and local authorities to restore tranquillity, the system of outrage and daring opposition to the laws has increased, and continues to increase, to an alarming extent. That a great portion of the commonalty are in possession of unlicensed arms, and that bodies of armed men have appeared lately on several occasions at noonday, for the purpose of obstructing the execution of the laws, and threatening the lives and properties of all who are opposed to their unlawful proceedings. That such is the demoralization of the lower classes, such their confederacy, and such the prevailing system of terror, that all endeavours to procure information, to convict and bring offenders to justice, are vain and futile. That it is our firm persuasion that the existing evils call for the application of strong and vigorous measures, and that the Insurrection Act, or some such measure, is best calculated to restore order and tranquillity. That in consequence of the quantity of hidden arms in this county, and the difficulty, if not impossibility, of obtaining information by means of which they could be discovered, it would be advisable to amend the Arms' Act, making the possession of unlicensed arms a transportable felony, giving all proper facility to the right of search, and limiting within proper restrictions the privilege of keeping arms at all. That it would be expedient at the present juncture to establish military posts throughout the country, to augment the police stations, as a measure calculated to prevent the further extension of the existing system of outrage, though at the same time we are firmly persuaded and convinced that no means short of the one we have already recommended will prove efficacious in the present calamitous state of this country."

Now, the present Government had oftentimes been accused of neglecting and disregarding the representations and applications of the magistracy, because they did not always think themselves called on immediately to comply with their requisitions. The right hon. and learned Gentleman opposite had not hesitated to accuse the Government of a disregard to the representation of the local magistracy of Ireland. Here there was a distinct call on the Government of the Duke of Northumberland, with reference to the disturbed state of the country. Was it responded to? The House would see from the letter of Mr. Gregory, at that time, how far this had been the case. The words of that Gentleman were:—

" His Grace, the Lord-lieutenant will direct his immediate attention to such of the measures recommended by the magistrates, that he will meet their wishes for the augmentation of the police stations to such extent as may be found expedient, that he will consider and communicate the result of his deliberations upon the specific recommendations of the magistracy with regard to the disposition of the military. With respect to the Insurrection Act, his Grace feels, that nothing but the increase and extension of the existing evil, and the proved failure of the conjoint exertions of the civil and military authorities under the existing law, could justify him in recommending it. That his Grace hopes, that the efforts of the magistracy, aided by those of Government, will shortly diminish the extent of the disturbances, and, that the suggestions of the magistrates respecting the Arms Act will engage his Grace's best attention."

And, in accordance with this letter, the act was not applied. It appeared, that in September a memorial was transmitted through Lord Enniskillen, Governor of Fermanagh, signed by 100 Protestants of the county of Fermanagh. The memorial concluded with the following statement:—

"The present apathy and indifference of the civil authorities, resident in our immediate neighbourhood, to our danger, compel us to lay this representation of our defenceless situation before your Excellency."

The following appeared in the *Evening Mail* of Sept. 28, 1829:—

"In consequence of the numerous outrages which have disgraced the neighbourhood of Kells, in this county (Meath), a meeting of noblemen, gentlemen, and landholders of said county was held on the 19th day of September at the Sessions house, in Kells, when the following resolutions were entered into:—'It was unanimously resolved, that a committee, consisting of the following noblemen and gentlemen, namely, Lord Bective, J. W. L. Naper, C. A. Nicholson, A. H. C. Pollock, and John Farrell, Esquires, be appointed to draw up resolutions for the purpose of offering rewards for bringing to justice the persons concerned in any outrage in this neighbourhood. That the disturbed parts of said county be divided into districts, and that the resident gentlemen and landholders in each district be earnestly requested to come forward and assist, as far as they can, the magistrates and the police in restoring the public peace.'"

"At a meeting of magistrates at Elphin, county of Roscommon, present, Lord Lorton, the Bishop of Elphin, Honourable R. King, Colonel Tennison, Dean French, &c., &c., 'it was resolved, that it is the opinion of this meeting, that the country is in an alarming state of insubordination to the laws, and that notwithstanding the active exertions of the magistrates dreadful outrages still continue to be perpetrated, in consequence of the spirit of intimidation which prevails, and which renders detection almost impossible. That we are determined to persevere in our exertions to put down this spirit, yet, from the limited power vested in us, we are compelled to call upon the Government to take the state of the country into its serious consideration, and to adopt such measures as it may in its wisdom consider necessary, to enforce the due administration of the laws, and the safety and protection of the peaceable inhabitants of the county. At the same time, we are of opinion, that nothing short of the re-enactment of the Insurrection Act will prove sufficient effectually to suppress the spirit of disaffection and intimidation which, it is to be lamented, so very generally exists.' The above resolutions were proposed by Lord Lorton, who stated, that he had called the meeting at Elphin on account of its central situation, in order to enable the gentlemen to return to their homes in safety; and that he put forth these resolutions with a view to check the evil which exists in our unfortunate, wretched, and barbarous country."

A special commission was opened at Cork in October of the same year, to try the Doneraile conspirators, who had combined to murder three magistrates. At the Limerick assizes of the same date, fourteen individuals were left for execution, and twenty-six for transportation. In May, 1830, a conflict took place at Dysart, which was described in the following terms:—

"May 31st. An encounter took place at Dysart (Queen's county), between the Blackfeet and Whitefeet, in which four or five had their skulls fractured. The principal leader of the Whitefeet was Matthew Whelan, who has not been more than four or five days out of gaol, from which he was liberated before the expiration of his sentence of three months imprisonment for a riot."

He quoted this for the purpose of showing, that such misfortunes had not occurred for the first time during the administration of the Marquess of Normanby. At the latter end of 1830, Mr. Dawson addressed the electors of Derry in these terms.—

"I am sorry to add, that some of the leading members in this coalition (to oust him from the representation), alike forgetful of the conduct of their family in Parliament, and of the peace of the country, have endeavoured with too much success to revive the no-popery cry. It is a mockery upon common sense to hear the Beresfords, who reluctantly came in at the twelfth hour to give their support to the Catholic Relief Bill, because their interests forced them to concede, now oppose my claims to the renewal of your suffrages; yet such is the conduct of this family. On every side I hear their clamours against me; but I leave the public to judge of the consistency of such men who wish to be Protestants in the North, and Catholics in the South. It was a very painful duty to witness the effects of the excited feelings of the country on the 12th of July, when armed bodies of men appeared in regular parade, and when excesses of the most frightful kind were committed—houses burned—men, women, and children driven from their homes, and forced to seek for protection in the bogs and woods. It is my firm opinion, that if as much pains had been taken to tranquillize, as have been employed to excite, the public feeling on that great question, the whole country would have been disposed to acquiesce in the decision of the Legislature. But as I cannot disguise from myself that the efforts to keep alive these feuds have been successful; and as I find, that my opinions are directly at variance with such principles, and that I could not represent with comfort to myself, or satisfaction to the constituent body, a county containing a very large proportion of men whose prejudices seem to increase, rather than diminish, notwithstanding the disappointment of all their predictions of evil, I have determined not to expose the county to the mischiefs of a contested election, in which these bad passions would be brought into fearful activity; and I shall, therefore, decline the honour of coming forward as a candidate on the present occasion."

These things having occurred up to 1830; he felt, as regarded the years 1831, 1832, 1833, and 1834,—which filled up the remaining interval before the accession of the present Government—that he might spare the House the trouble of entering into any further details, because they must be in the recollection of Members, having rendered it necessary for Lord Grey to come down to Parliament for a measure of coercion, and because they must also hold in remembrance the forcible exposition of the state of the country then made in justification of that act by his (Lord Morpeth's) noble predecessor in his present office. One more return, however, he had, which he would give to the House. It had often been stated in that House and elsewhere, that the clergy were those more particularly obnoxious to popular violence, and that they had more especially been marked out for attack or intimidation during the official existence of the present Government. Now, during the administration of Lord Normanby, one clergyman, the Rev. Mr. Dawson, was barbarously murdered, another, the Rev. Mr. Beresford, was recently shot at. The murder happened within three or four months of our accession to office. If, however, these cases were contrasted with the offences, accompanied with circumstances of outrage, committed on the clergy during the years 1829 and 1830, a great difference would at once be perceived. This would be seen from the following,—

LIST OF OUTRAGES UPON CLERGYMEN AND CHURCHES IN 1829 AND 1830.

April 19, 1829—Rev. Mr. Craig, of Roscommon, fired at.

August—Rev. Mr. Minchin, of county Clare; hooted, and his car damaged—the linch-pin taken out, that he and his wife might be injured.

August — Rev. Mr. Davoren, of county Clare; property injured—servants beaten—life, with those of all family and servants in danger.

October 11—Rev. Mr. Shaw; house broken into, and himself compelled to take many illegal oaths.

August 4—Rev. Mr. Armstrong of Tipperary; fired at in the open day by a party with their faces blackened.

August 10—Rev. Mr. King, of Fermanagh; house set on fire.

October 23—Rev. Mr. Going, of Tipperary; murdered.

November 11—Rev. Mr. Day of Roscommon; severely wounded with a pistol shot.

May 22—Rev. Mr. Herbert of Tipperary; church windows demolished, and a Rockite notice left, threatening him with the death of Mr. Shear.

August—The church, near Cloughgordan, razed to the ground.

May 19, 1830—Rev. Mr. White of Tyrone; a gun fired through his bed-room window, and two balls lodged in the wall over the bed where he lay sleeping.

Several other outrages of a most serious character were committed on clergymen. The great preponderance of such assaults and offences prior to the administration of Lord Normanby, satisfactorily refuted the exclusive nature of the charge to which he referred. The right hon. and learned Gentleman, in the course of his speech, had also alluded to the great increase in the number of Government rewards since the commencement of the administration of the Marquess of Normanby. He admitted at once that there was a great increase; rewards were far more abundantly offered. One motive for it was, that it was felt that the injured parties derive satisfaction from the proclamation of rewards for the discovery of their assailants. The country also would receive the impression that the Government was in earnest in its endeavours to suppress crime. The present Government had resorted to the practice much more frequently than preceding Governments. In the instance of the very last outrage he had referred to, when the Rev. Mr. Craig was fired at, no reward was offered by the then Government. In the case of the Rev. Mr. Minchin no reward was offered, nor was any offered in the case of the demolition of Cloughgordan church When the Rev. Mr. White was shot at in his bedroom a pardon was offered to the accomplice but no reward. It had also been complained of, that so great a difference existed between the amount of the rewards offered and the amount of rewards paid. A great, he did not say an equal, disparity, his noble Friend beside him (Lord J. Russell) informed him existed in England. The right hon. and learned Gentleman had detailed the cases of some particular outrages of a very dreadful nature. If it were necessary he could recite individual cases of outrage still more horrible, still more dismal and harrowing, which had occurred at previous periods, and which would far exceed in all these attributes those which the right hon. and learned Gentleman had detailed, and for which he had called on the sympathies of the House. He alluded to such cases as the murders of the Farrances, the Sheas, and the Maras, all of which took place during former administrations. The hon. and learned Gentleman had dilated more especially on that one particular outrage which had recently been committed—the murder of the late Lord Norbury. Now, the Government were not in possession of any clue, that is to say, any substantial clue, to the discovery of the persons who committed that dreadful crime. All he would now say would be to express his feeling—a feeling in which every right-minded man must participate—of utter detestation, horror, and, indeed, of alarm, at that atrocious crime. The right hon. and learned Gentleman had strongly urged that in Ireland crime would be found to be connected with political exasperation. But it so happened that in the case of this most dreadful murder, no such feeling, as far as the immediate neighbourhood was concerned, appeared to have existed, for the town adjacent to the property of the late Earl of Norbury had never been the scene of any political agitation—no rent had been collected there, and no Precursor Society had ever been formed. Indeed, after the character which had been drawn of that noble Lord by a neighbouring Roman Catholic priest, he trusted that it might be hoped that the inhabitants of the neighbourhood could not be considered as implicated in so black, so atrocious a transaction. Now, as to the actual statistics of crime in Ireland. He must first, however, premise that the Government never wished to turn the actual or comparative tranquillity of that country into any matter of boasting, or to consider it as any test of merit on their part. Indeed, as a general rule, he should deprecate the making the increase or decrease of crime in a country a sort of gauge or measure of the success of an administration; for he thought it far from a wholesome or desirable state of things that any party in the State should—he did not say designedly, but insensibly, and by the ordinary current of party feeling—conceive they had an interest in magnifying the state of crime in a country at any particular period. He did not mean that there should not be the fullest latitude of censure upon the Government of the day; but there was the danger that parties would never bestir themselves with the same energy to counteract a state of things which they were long contending to be the state that did actually exist. All had a common interest; it was the common duty, and ought to be the common object, of all to unite and to combine every means within their power to punish crime. He for one should think that it would redound far more to the credit of any Government with which he might be connected, if while they held it to be their paramount duty to remove the causes of disaffection and disturbances, they yet preferred, while the disturbances existed, to exhibit a formidable array of prosecutions, rather than a calendar lightened by the remissness or neglect of the Government. He was not then very anxious as regarded those portions of the right hon. Gentleman's observations which tended to show the positive amount of crime in Ireland. The hon. and learned Gentlemen with whom he had been connected since he had held his present office (it was happier for them than for him that their connexion had been continually interrupted), had been exceedingly active and vigilant in everything connected with the prosecutions on the part of the Crown. He wished, nevertheless, to put the House in possession of what was the real state of Ireland as regarded crime. He had no desire to blink any part of this most important subject. Before entering more at large into this branch of the question, he must observe upon a remark of the right hon. Gentleman as to the discrepancy existing between the returns of the inspectors of prisons and those of the clerks of the peace and of the Crown. Government also lamented that discrepancy; and the subject had already been mentioned by Members of the Government in the other House of Parliament. The causes of this discrepancy he might as well quote from the report of the inspectors-general of prisons. Those gentlemen said—

> "On transmitting our annual return of crime under the provisions of the Prison Act, made up with as much accuracy as the materials from which it is taken will afford, we think right to submit to you our opinion as to the defects of the present system, and to point out the only manner by which we conceive that the Government will arrive at a complete and accurate return of crime in Ireland. By the Prison Act the clerks of the Crown and peace are required at every assizes and quarter sessions to furnish the inspector of prisons in their respective counties with a schedule of the

several prisoners brought to trial at such assizes or quarter sessions respectively, from which schedules the inspector of prisons in the several counties are required to make a general statement at the end of the year; by this arrangement, the returns of the inspectors could at best be but a duplicate of the annual returns required by Government from those officers of the Crown and county under another Act of Parliament; but in point of fact they are not duplicates, inasmuch as the clerks of the Crown and peace cannot universally be prevailed on by the gaol inspectors to make the returns with regularity, and the deficiency must be made up out of the gaol books. They also vary in the view they take of the classes of prisoners which the returns ought to include. The section limits the returns to persons brought to trial, and while some clerks of the Crown and peace confine themselves to this class of prisoners, others include those who were not brought to trial, and who are in all cases included in their returns to Government; and it will ever be found that there are so many causes of discrepancy that the returns made by these officers of Government, and those made to local inspectors of gaols, and by them to the inspectors-general, will never correspond. There is one cause of discrepancy, namely, the repetition of names in these returns of the Crown and peace which can be and are corrected by the inspectors of gaols; but although this correction removes an inaccuracy, it adds to the difference between the two returns. But supposing no discrepancy to exist, the system would still only supply to Government duplicate returns, coming from the same source, although one return is made to pass through the inspector of the gaol, but without reference to gaol records."

The discrepancy was still further explained in the following letter communicated by the clerk of the peace at Tipperary:—

"I have the honour to transmit you herewith a copy of a return which I made for Mr. Howly, our assistant-barrister, at the commencement of the present sessions of this town (not as yet terminated), which shows the numbers charged with crime at the periods stated in your letter of the 24th instant. With reference to the annual criminal returns, I beg leave to mention that, as clerk of the peace, I have no means of ascertaining the number of committals in the year; I can only give a return of the number of persons included in the different bills of indictment at each sessions, so if one person is indicted for three offences (suppose riot, rescue, and assault), by the annual return he appears as three, and if his trial is postponed, he again appears as three; consequently the annual returns are incorrect as to persons."

These were the causes of the discrepancy. Government were about to turn their attention to the subject, in order that this portion of the statistics of crime might be made more uniform. Now, as regarded the present state and amount of crime in Ireland. He could assure the right hon. and learned Gentleman that he never meant to put out of the view of the House of Commons or himself the difference made in the mode of making the returns by the regulation established by Colonel Shaw Kennedy at the time the constabulary force in Dublin was consolidated and put into operation. What occurred on that occasion was stated in the following letter of Major Miller, of the 15th March, 1838:—

"No reliance could be placed on the returns made of petty or common assaults under the old system. Some officers reported the offences of that nature accurately in their monthly statements; but the majority of the chief constables excluded them. On commencing business in the present constabulary office, it was deemed much more satisfactory to include in our monthly returns those occurrences only of which special reports had been made, during the period, to the inspector-general, as, by such means, we could hold ourselves responsible for the perfect fidelity of our monthly statements. Our returns, therefore, profess to contain merely a statement of occurrences so reported (see heading of accompanying form marked A). With a view, however of ascertaining the amount of offences of a less serious character than those which it has long been the practice of the police to report upon as they occur, a form of return (see accompanying document B) was prepared, which is now filled up by the district officers, and forwarded periodically to head-quarters. We have, therefore, now records, not only of the graver offences committed in the country, but also of those of a less serious nature."

The returns now presented were, therefore, much more authentic than they had previously been, but he was not about to compare these returns with the former ones, for the purpose of showing the diminution, because for the reasons he had stated, such a comparison would be unfair. The new system did not come into operation till 1836, and did not come into full play until 1837, and he should, therefore, confine himself to returns since that period, a comparison between which would be fair. He would quote the report of the outrages returned to the constabulary force, for the purpose of showing that there had not been an aggregate increase of crime in Ireland. The return of outrages reported by the constabulary force was, for the six months from July to

December, 1837, 3,473; from January to June, 1838, 2,622; from July to December, 1838, 2,356; so that from July, 1837, to December, 1838, there had been a decrease of from 3,473 to 2,356. At the same time, however, that there was this decrease upon the report of outrages sent to the constabulary force, he was quite ready to admit to the right hon. Gentleman, that there had been a great increase in the returns of both the clerks of the Crown and the clerks of the peace, and also of the inspectors of prisons. He had in his hand a return of all the convictions before magistrates, including the offences which it had not been thought worth while to include in the reports of the constabulary officers of the districts to the chief office in Dublin. Of convictions for these minor offences, there were from January to June, 1837, 71,297; from July to December, 74,336; from January to June, 1838, 74,539; from July to December, 1838, 86,015—being an increase in these minor offences of from 71,297 to 86,015. He hailed this increase with satisfaction. He attributed it to the superior efficiency of the constabulary force both in the metropolis and throughout every district in Ireland. In the article of road nuisances alone there was an increase from the first six months of 1837, when the number was 12,000, to the last six months of 1838, when the number was 17,000. The convictions of publicans for breaches of the Spirit Licensing Act, during the first six months, he had already mentioned were 992; for the last-mentioned period of six months they had been 1,308. The convictions for intoxication during the first period were 16,000; during the last period they had increased to 23,000. This increase in the convictions for minor offences he looked upon as a convincing evidence of the activity and vigilance of the constabulary. On the other hand, turning to the committals for forcible possession (an offence calculated more than any other to promote disturbance) he found that they were, in the first period of six months, 1,600, but in the last six months, they had decreased to 930. In the article of homicide, the whole number of cases reported to the constabulary force in 1834, was 278; in 1835, 261; in 1836, 231; in 1837, 228; in 1838, 241. Thus there was a reduction in 1838, as compared with 1834, of from 278 to 241. Of assaults on the police there were, in 1834, 125; in 1835, 118; in 1836, 119; in 1837, 91; and in 1838, 94. The decrease here was from 125 to 94 in the four years. The convictions for cutting and maiming were, in 1835, 1,343; in 1836, 1,422; in 1837, 1,161; in 1838, 944. Of convictions for burglary there were, in 1834, 285; in 1835, 210; in 1836, 193; in 1837, 158; in 1838, 120. Of attacks on houses there were, in 1835, 818; in 1836, 518; in 1837, 637; in 1838, 352. Of illegal notices there were, in 1835, 755; in 1836, 593; in 1837, 684; in 1838, 409. For riots and factious fights the convictions were, in 1835, 884; in 1836, 541; in 1837, 175; in 1838, 134. Thus it appeared that, with very few exceptions, there had been a gradual and constant decrease in all these crimes, from the year 1834 to the year 1838. These returns were exclusive of the cities of Dublin, Cork, and Limerick. Upon the whole, however, it appeared, and it was most satisfactory to see it, that there was a decrease in the graver sorts of crime, and at the same time an increase in the committals for minor offences—a clear evidence that there had been an increased activity on the part of the local authorities and the constabulary force. Look at the number of committals in former years. The noble Viscount read the following table.

INCREASE OF COMMITTALS.

	Persons Committed for Trial.
1807.—Insurrection Act introduced by the Duke of Wellington; military force, 48,559 . . .	3,512
1809—	3,639
1812—	4,493
(No regular police)	
1814—Peace preservation force introduced by Sir Robert Peel .	5,167
1823—Lord Londonderry had stated the year before, in applying for the re-enactment of the Insurrection Act, and suspension of the Habeas Corpus, "it was perfectly compatible with the present state of affairs in Ireland, extraordinary as it might seem, that that country was now in a better situation than at any former period, although a portion of its population was arrayed against the legal authorities." Constabulary Act introduced in consequence	15,363
1833—The police force having become more efficient, the military force, 24,031	17,819

1835—	21,305
1836—The constabulary establishment put on a different footing, Attorney-General directed Crown prosecutions at the sessions, military force 17,080	23,891
1837—	24,453
1838—	25,443

Here was an increase from 1807 to 1838 of from 3,512 to 25,443; or to take a more restricted period, that is, from 1825, when they were 15,515, to 1838, when they were 25,443. The increase here was clear; and the result was a most satisfactory indication of the efficiency and activity of those to whom was entrusted the apprehension and conviction of offenders. Then it would also be satisfactory to find, that not only the number of committals had increased in proportion to the number of offences, but also that the number of convictions had increased in proportion to the number of committals.

Years.	Committals.	Convictions.
1825..	15,515	8,571
1826..	16,318	8,716
1827..	18,030	10,206
1828..	14,683	9,269
1829..	15,271	9,499
1830..	15,794	9,902
1831..	16,192	9,605
1832..	16,056	9,759
1833..	17,819	11,444
1834..	21,381	14,253
1835..	21,305	15,216
1836..	23,891	18,110
1837..	24,453	19,185
1838..	25,443	19,329

Thus it appeared, that the number of convictions in 1825 was in the ratio of one half, while in 1838 the number of convictions was in the ratio of four fifths, and, he believed, that this was about equal to the ratio in England, where the convictions were 71 per cent. of the proportion of committals. He had also a further return of persons committed, and convicted for grave offences, furnished by the inspector general of prisons, from the year 1832 to 1838 inclusive. In 1832 the number committed for murder and manslaughter was 620, convicted 168; in 1833, committed 687, convicted 274; in 1834, committed 575, convicted 299; in 1835, committed 712, convicted 309; in 1836, committed 620, convicted 292; in 1837, committed 519, convicted 175; in 1838, committed 424; convicted 199. Taking the whole returns of the committals, &c., for offences affecting human life, including those he had just mentioned, together with charges for shooting at, stabbing, administering poison, assaults with intent to murder, and conspiracy to murder, he found that in 1832 the number of committals was 772; of convictions, 203. In 1833, committals 826; convictions 303. In 1834, committals 729; convictions 245. In 1835, committals 922; convictions 409. In 1836, committals 843; convictions 425. In 1837, committals 688; convictions 263. In 1838, committals 575; convictions 298; thus showing an increased proportion of convictions, in comparison of committals, since 1832. He would now proceed to read an extract from a letter written some time ago by a gentleman who had had very great experience in the administration of criminal justice in Ireland, he meant Mr. Barrington, the Crown solicitor at Limerick. "If I were asked what is the cause of the increased number of committals, I should reply, that after an experience as a public officer of upwards of twenty years, with many opportunities of observing the state of Ireland, and especially that part from time to time which has been the most disturbed, it arises from the efficacy of the police, the prevention of the compromise of crimes, the establishment of petty sessions, and the increased activity of the constables in the apprehension of persons charged with even the most petty offences, for while the committal in 1806 for larcenies amounted to 863, and for assaults to 1,244, in 1836 the committals for larcenies was 6,549, for assaults 7,376; and it will be found, that there is a like increase of committals for other minor offences, though I believe the number of such offences is not much greater than in 1806. I have always found that the minor offences decreased in proportion as the Whiteboy outrages and other great crimes increased." With respect to the system of Ribandism, to which the right hon. and learned Gentleman adverted often in the course of his speech, it was no doubt a subject to which, beyond all others, the attention of Government should be directed. Undoubtedly some clue was in the possession of the Government in connexion with this subject; but all information which they had received up to the present moment was very vague and general. He hoped that the right hon. and learned Gentleman would not press for all the returns that he had moved for on this subject, because they could not be made without incurring much inconvenience, and without running the risk of defeating the object the right hon. Gentleman had in view, as it would only tend to put parties on their guard, and induce them to resort to some other means of concealing themselves, and other modes of combining for the purposes of insubordination. He could only assure the right hon. and learned Gentleman, that the greatest exertions had been made to trace out the system in its different bearings; but hitherto the information that had been obtained was of a very vague description; but the best exertions would be used to obtain more accurate and definite information on the subject. From all the infomation that the Government had obtained, it did not appear, that there was any trace of connexion between this system and the more atrocious crimes that had been committed, although, undoubtedly, there appeared to be an intimate connexion with many cases of assault. But no doubt the nature of such proceedings, if unchecked, might tend to increase the committal of even the more atrocious kinds of crime. He had now gone through the details in answer to the right hon. and learned Gentleman, of which much was necessarily of a very dry and uninteresting nature. He trusted, that the House would now enable him to deal with that other part of the right hon. Gentleman's speech which he had reserved, and first he would observe, that he believed, that he had answered by anticipation that part of the right hon. Gentleman's speech in which he charged the Government by implication, and impugned their conduct as holding out an encouragement to crime, and evincing a want of attention to the due administration of justice. This charge he treated with complete indifference, not from the light nature of the matter alleged, but from a firm and conscientious conviction of its utter groundlessness. There might be a difference of opinion as to the line of policy pursued by the Government, and as to the results which might be expected to be derived from it —he had no right to quarrel with an expression of opinion of Gentlemen opposite on this subject, as it was perfectly open to them to arraign as they chose the conduct of the Administration with reference to the government of Ireland. It was perfectly open to them to impute to the sympathy which the Government had professed to feel, and endeavoured to exhibit with the great mass of the people of that country, as far as they thought such sympathy could be legitimately felt, and properly exhibited, or to the measures they had introduced in Parliament, or to any of the executive acts of administration, or even, if you will, to such acts of courtesy and communication which had passed between himself and the representative of the metropolis of Ireland; for it was on such high-minded and dignified attacks that they chiefly rested their charge:—to all or any of these the right hon. and learned Gentleman might impute the evils of which Ireland is, unfortunately, still the theatre. It was equally open to them to contend that an opposite line of policy, a fixed refusal to identify themselves with any of the sins, or admit any of the pretensions of the bulk of the people, to hold at arm's length for all time and under every modification of circumstance the person whom they had to so great an extent adopted as the interpreter of their feelings, and the depository of their confidence would have been a course better calculated to secure the peace of the country, and smooth the administration of public affairs; such grounds of attack, whether logical and pertinent or not, were fair matters for party warfare; but when they proceeded further, and imputed to the Government an intentional connivance at crime, a wilful abetting of outrage, a disregard of the lives and properties of her Majesty's subjects, a voluntary and designed neglect of the means of protection and punishment, he repelled the assertion and accusation as strongly as man could. They were utterly manifestly, and even absurdly, unfounded. He denied them *in toto*, and challenged the right hon. and learned Gentleman, or any other hon. Member, to the disproof of the exact reverse. He had shown, that in all preceding times a great amount of crime, and of an atrocious nature, had stained the annals of Ireland. He had shown, that the law was administered now with more certainty and vigor than at any previous time; and he would willingly put the Government of Lord Normanby in Ireland in comparison with that of any of his predecessors. The right hon. and learned Gentleman went on to allude to the recent appointment of his hon. and learned Friend, the Member for Clonmell.

He was glad that his learned Friend was in his place to answer for himself, and he was perfectly satisfied that the result would be, that the House would find that the appointment was well and deservedly bestowed. With reference, however, to one point connected with this subject, which was touched on by the right hon. Gentleman, he felt called upon to make one or two remarks. At the time when his hon. and learned Friend joined the General Association in Ireland, that country was in a state of considerable excitement, in consequence of one of the Houses of Parliament having refused to concede the Municipal Bill, which was submitted to them by this House as being founded on the principles of equal justice, and called for by the circumstances of Ireland. When, however, his hon. and learned Friend, and others of his countrymen, saw that the Government was in earnest in their desires to promote the welfare of Ireland, they not only withdrew from that body, but the association itself was dissolved. He perhaps might be told that the Precursor Society was only a continuance of the General Association, and was established in furtherance of the same views; but did hon. Gentlemen opposite mean to assert that the Government viewed with satisfaction the formation of the Precursor Society. Whatever notion hon. Gentlemen opposite might form on this subject, he believed that the members of the Precursor Society had formed a very different opinion, and had arrived at a very different conclusion—they were of an opinion exactly the reverse of that expressed by the right hon. and learned Gentleman. The right hon. Gentleman then asked whether the appointment of his hon. and learned Friend had accompanied that of his noble Friend, the present Lord-lieutenant. After the manly avowal of opinion made by his noble Friend in his proper place elsewhere, in answer to the accusation that had been brought against him, he should consider it derogatory in him to offer anything further in defence of his noble Friend. The course recommended by his noble Friend had been the course that had been pursued by her Majesty's Government, and he was sure that no one who had ever gone to Ireland in the high situation to which his noble Friend had been appointed, meant more sincerely to execute and confirm the law as he found it than his noble Friend. As for the underhand support which it was alleged his noble Friend would give to the enemies of the Church, he believed that they could not find a man in the circle of the kingdom more attached to the doctrines of the establishment, and what was still better, of genuine Christianity itself, and he believed, that these great interests could not be placed in safer hands than those of his noble Friend. The same charge, however, of rooted dislike and of hostility to the Established Church was brought forward against the Marquess of Normanby while he carried on the Government of Ireland; when his noble Friend had any acts to perform or appointments to make connected with the Established Church in Ireland, he (Lord Morpeth) would be bold to challenge a comparison of the conduct pursued by the Marquess of Normanby with that pursued by the most orthodox and exclusive of his predecessors. He did not mean to deny that many offences of a very grave nature had recently been perpetrated in Ireland; but he did not think that the Government or the people should be made liable to odium on this ground. The right hon. and learned Gentleman had alluded to the lamented murder of Lord Norbury, and to the proceeding which it was alleged took place in the presence of Lord Charleville at Tullamore. As for the assertion that Lord Charleville was assailed at Tullamore, no one for a single moment would presume to question the impression made on the mind of the noble Lord by what he saw around him. He would only say that the Government had received a very different report from this—a report from good authority, conveying a very different impression of what had occurred; they had been informed that the disturbance in question arose in consequence of a number of drunken persons being turned out of a public-house at the time the noble Earl was passing, and that it was not directed against the noble Earl. The mind of the noble Earl being naturally at the time much excited, the noble Earl might misapprehend the matter, and, though he had no doubt that the impression made on the noble Earl was as the noble Earl described it, yet he must say that the impression was not warranted by what other persons described themselves to have seen. In another instance, that noble Earl, it seemed, had made a statement in which he brought a general accusation against the people. He was reported to have said at the meeting in the King's County:—

"I may be told, because the steward who attended my friend gave no alarm—that, possessed with terror, deprived of reason by the horrid sight he had seen, he did not tell the people returning from a funeral that his lord was butchered, and, consequently, that they were in ignorance of the fact. Would to God I could plead ignorance for them; but no, my lord, I have it in evidence that, though the steward made no communication to them—though the steward raised no alarm—strange as it may appear, they were informed of the murder. Two persons approached the lodge gate, addressed themselves to the woman there, and asked the astounding question, whether Lord Norbury was not shot? I mention this because it deserves your serious consideration."

Now, of course, the noble Earl fully believed in the truth of this statement, but since that time he had received another version of the proceedings. It was the sworn information of the female at the lodge:—

"King's County to wit. } "The further information of Elizabeth Chenley, of Durrow, who, being duly sworn on the Holy Evangelists, deposed and saith—'After Lord Norbury had been brought to the lodge, and whilst his Lordship was in the lodge, I went out on the avenue opposite to the lodge, and at the time the people were returning from the funeral I spoke to some of the people, and told them that Lord Norbury had been shot. They replied they heard the shot; at this moment I heard one man say to another, 'you are a handy man at stopping blood;' the man who was so addressed then asked me 'is the wound bleeding?' I replied, 'I do not know;' he said, 'if it is bleeding, the best way is to tie a handkerchief straight across the wound, which will prevent it from bleeding;' this man, whom I do not know, seemed anxious to enter the lodge, to render assistance, but I was unwilling to allow him into the presence of Lord Norbury; the men hen went out of the gate, on their way towards Tullamore, after the rest of the funeral people, as I suppose; at the time I first saw the above two men they were coming from the direction of the church-yard, which is inside of the demesne, and there were some persons belonging to the funeral a few yards before them, and others after them. I told this story before to Thomas Geerahty, the under steward, exactly as I have now related it; I never expressed any suspicion respecting these men, nor did I ever say they did not belong to the funeral; I may have told this story to other persons, but I do not recollect; the men said the report of the shot was very loud. I considered it loud too, but as shots were constantly fired in the demesne by the gamekeeper, and others belonging to the place, at rabbits, I did not consider it any thing remarkable.

"Elizabeth Chenley, her ⋈ mark.

"Sworn before us, this 16th January, 1839.
(Signed) "H. J. Brownrigg,
"F. B. Haly."

"The above information was taken before the Provincial Inspector and another gentleman in the public service."

Again, in the same speech of the noble Earl, to the magistrates of King's county, it was stated that the following circumstance connected with a murder recently occurred:

"A case occurred not long since, when a man was sent into a neighbourhood not far from the spot on which I am standing, to murder a man, whose name I shall not now mention—he acted under orders, and there are many present who know to what I allude. He got his orders, but when the name was mentioned, some cause, some act, perhaps, by which, on a previous occasion, his own life had been spared by that individual, made him feel reluctance to be his butcher, and he turned to the other—for there were two assassins present—and he said, 'Do you meet the object; your hand may be more steady to murder Mr. So-and-So; your hand might be in this case more secure than mine; do you take him, and I will take the woman.' Was there any feeling of private revenge in either? No, they were sent in, ordered and directed to commit murder, and I say the duty of the Government is to fathom that conspiracy of which they have decided information."

He would only say, that it was the duty of the Government to use every exertion to trace out any conspiracy of such a nature as that described in this speech; but in the case quoted above, they had not been able to make out the existence of any foundation for the entire story. He could not help making some allusion to charges of conspiracy that were made in another county, besides the King's county. He found, on this subject, the following extract in an Irish newspaper. In allusion to the denial of the proof of conspiracy, it says:—

"Be it so. But what say on this subject the Irish gentry and the Irish journals? Is it no symptom of a conspiracy—a dark, widespread, and deadly conspiracy—to find Protestant gentlemen constrained for the protection of their lives to carry arms, while proceeding to the discharge in open day of their ordinary duties? Is no evidence of conspiracy afforded by the fact, that in the county of Longford Protestant grand jurors cannot venture to meet the Queen's judges unless in bodies and armed, exactly as if they were traversing a country infested by savage and murderous outlaws. The following communication from a Grand Juror of that county, a gentleman of the highest respectability and unquestionable honour, which has reached us this morning, will prove that what we have alleged on this subject is no idle or imaginary statement. Our correspondent writes thus:—'This county has not been in so alarming a state in the memory of the oldest inhabitant. A feeling of universal gloom and distrust appears to hang over every respectable Protestant and Roman Catholic. The gentry came into Longford, each well armed, and in bodies, as if they were traversing an enemy's country, and in hourly expectation of the assassin's bullet, or the open attacks of the ferocious and blood-stained peasantry. The gaol was never before so crowded with prisoners.'"

In the very next number of the same newspaper, the following contradiction to this statement was inserted:—

"We find, by a letter from Longford, that we were led into an error in our last publication, in stating that the gentry of the country were obliged to come to attend the assizes in bodies, and armed for self-protection. The impression on our correspondent's mind, by the representations made to him on the subject, induced him to form that opinion. As to the state of the county, and the necessity felt by many of the gentlemen to carry arms about their persons, we are fully borne out in the statement, and there is but one opinion as to the insecurity of life and property throughout Longford. We trust the examples now about to be made in that county, amongst others, the conviction of Michael Kenney for the murder of Hugh Moorehead, will be a salutary warning to the misguided peasantry, and teach them not to rely upon the impunity which has been extended, so mischievously of late, to political offences."

He had alluded to the statement made at the meeting of the magistrates in King's County by Lord Charleville; but he should now proceed to allude more directly to other matters that occurred at this meeting as it referred to the conduct pursued by the Government. A resolution was carried at this meeting in King's county to the following effect:—

"That it appears to this meeting, that the answer conveyed to the magistrates of Tipperary from Mr. Under-Secretary Drummond has had the unfortunate effect of increasing the animosities entertained against the owners of the soil by the occupants who now constitute themselves the sole arbitrators of the rights, as well as the duties, of property. That far from allaying the bad feelings then existing and so industriously excited by the enemies of social order and by selfish agitators, it has had the tendency to encourage the disaffected, and to embolden the disturbers of the public peace."

As the expressions used by Mr. Drummond in his letter had been so much commented on, he should consider himself unworthy of the satisfaction which he had in acting with that Gentleman if he did not, without the slightest hesitation, openly and fully state his feelings on this subject. It did not appear to him, that the abstract sentiment complained of, that property had its duties as well as its rights, could be readily contravened, nor that it could be considered as of a very anti-social tendency; but he might be told, that the application of such language was improper when they regarded both time and place, and that language which was very proper at one time, might be very improper and ill-advised at another. But could it be supposed, that the lawless and reckless persons who, as we have seen no longer ago than at the late special commission in the county of Tipperary, at the slightest prompting of any of the men with whom they might be headed, either by formal or tacit engagement, or by mere identity of situation and interests, could at once resolve upon the commission of the most deadly crime by which they could outrage their Maker, and injure their fellow, brood over their purpose for weeks and months with unsleeping vigilance, and at last accomplish it with cool and deliberate accuracy; could they suppose, that such persons, or such a brotherhood, would be influenced by the publication of a common truism from the desk of a Government officer— could it be supposed, that persons with such habits, and such passions, could be thus lightly operated on? Whether the announcement was calculated to be of very special service he would not stop to inquire, but he had no hesitation in saying, that when the result of all the inquiries they had been able to make, as well as all the experience past history showed them, that it was a matter of fact that disputes as to the tenure of land was at the bottom of almost all the graver forms of outrage which infest the soil and blight the social system in Ireland. Was there anything so misplaced or culpable that, in answer to a lengthened statement from the magistrates of Tipperary, entering into the courses of crime, the Under Secretary of State should take upon himself to follow them in making something like a similar communication to that which they had made, and above all, in pointing out to those who alone could be addressed with effect upon the subject, the quarter from which all dangers mainly emanated? Was it misplaced in him to caution them, lest, by any abuse of power or privilege, they should give fresh provocation and incentive, he did not, he could not say, palliation, to the prevailing evil? He would beg the attention of the House to a return which he held in his hand.

"*Gross Number of Ejectments brought in the Superior Courts, Dublin, in the following Years, in the Counties named:—*

Tipperary.—In 1833, 117; in 1834, 195; in 1835, 175; in 1836, 205; in 1837, 100; in 1838, 90—total, 882.

Carlow.—In 1833, 33; in 1834, 40; in 1835, 61; in 1836, 17; in 1837, 18; in 1838, 12—total, 191.

Longford.—In 1833, 30; in 1834, 23; in 1835, 36; in 1836, 48; in 1837, 24; in 1838, 11—total, 172, besides 330 from quarter sessions court.

Queen's County.—In 1833, 45; in 1834, 37; in 1835, 32; in 1836, 42; in 1837, 37; in 1838, 20—total, 213.

King's County.—In 1833, 28; in 1834, 22; in 1835, 42; in 1836, 31; in 1837, 17; in 1838, 16—total 156.

Sligo.—In 1833, 33; in 1834, 36; in 1835, 34; in 1836, 43; in 1837, 21; in 1838, 13—total, 180.

Westmeath.—In 1833, 42; in 1834, 37; in 1835, 47; in 1836, 44; in 1837, 18; in 1838, 12—total, 200."

In this return the House might take as the average of families at four in each case, and the average of individuals in each family at five. That was about twenty persons turned out in each case of ejectment. He did not know whether the return of these cases, which he had just read, would prove much; but he had in his possession a number of documents referring to individual cases, and memorials stating facts which, if he read them to the House, would produce a very strong impression, and might cause no pleasant feelings in the public. He would not, however, read these documents; but Government would not do its duty if it confined the voice of warning entirely to one side. Was Mr. Drummond, however, the only person who was to be blamed for using this language? Mr. Leslie Foster stated, before the Committee of the House of Lords, in 1825,—

"In point of fact, except in some well-regulated estates, is not the situation of the peasantry of Ireland, generally speaking, extremely miserable?—Extremely so; beyond what any person can believe who has not seen their condition. . . . . . . Are you aware, that the Protestant middlemen find greater difficulty in enforcing their claims for rent than the Catholics?—Certainly not; the consideration of religion does not enter at all, I think, into these relations. . . . . . . If your Lordships ask me what becomes of this surplus stock of population, it is a matter on which I have, in my late journeys through Ireland, endeavoured to form some opinion, and I conceive, that in many instances, they wander about the country as mere mendicants; but that more frequently they betake themselves to the nearest large towns, and there occupy as lodgers the most wretched hovels, in the most miserable streets, in the vain hope of occasionally getting a day's work. Their resort to those towns produces such misery as it is impossible to describe."

"To what circumstances do you attribute the frequent recurrence of disturbances in Ireland of late years?—I think the proximate cause is the extreme physical misery of the peasantry, coupled with their liability to be called upon for the payment of different charges, which it is perfectly impossible for them to meet; the immediate cause of disturbance I conceive to be the attempt to ensure these demands by the various processes of the law. I think the remote cause is a radically vicious structure of society which prevails in many parts of Ireland, and which has originated in the events of Irish history."

Again, Mr. Blackburn, who was lately Attorney-general, made the following statement, about the same time, to the Committee of the House of Commons:—

"My opinion is, that in Limerick and the adjacent parts of the counties of Cork and Kerry, the spirit of insurrection which has broken out proceeded from local causes and the condition of the lower orders of the people. The population of the parts of the country where insurrections were most prevalent is extremely dense. The property is greatly subdivided, and the condition of the lower orders of the people is more miserable than I can describe it. Land in that county, which is totally destitute of manufactures, appears to me to have become (if I may use the expression), a necessary of life. I think the outrages were in general stimulated by some personal motive, or something which was felt as an aggression by the parties who committed them."

No doubt a feeling existed in the minds of the poorer classes in favour of those who committed crimes under circumstances such as he had just described, and they seemed generally to act under the apprehension that they might be placed in a similar situation. He was of opinion that no sudden change of measures or men could produce any very material result in effecting a complete cure. He thought that on this point the evidence was very well summed up in a passage in the recent work of Mr. Cornwall Lewis on Ireland, a gentleman who made himself well acquainted with the social condition of that country, where he was engaged as a commissioner of Poor-law inquiry. He said :—

> "We have traced the Whiteboy disposition to its source, and proved, by unimpeachable evidence, that it springs from the peculiar state of the peasantry, which makes the possession of land a necessary of life. Having shown that the Irish disturbances have this origin, it is needless to say, that there is no prospect of suppressing them by the fear of punishment, so long as the same causes continue in force. All species of legal severity compatible with our form of government and our state of civilization, have been tried, and have failed. *Pœnarum exhaustum satis est.* Upon men who have nothing to hope in their actual state, and little to fear from the consequences of crime, it is vain to attempt to work with the ordinary engines of government. What influence can a ruler exercise on a man who despairs of being better, and yet can scarcely be worse? who has nothing to gain by obeying the law, and nothing to lose by disobeying? 'When the heart is past hope,' says the proverb, 'the face is past shame.'"

He would again ask whether they could suppose that the opinion uttered by Mr. Drummond could have the effect of conveying to the minds of the peasantry the impression that they would escape punishment for the commission of serious crimes? Nothing could be more unfounded; for at the very moment this opinion was expressed, the Government was actually in possession of a clue for the discovery of the actual murderers in question, and this had since been followed up by the apprehension of the criminals by the police, and their prosecution by the law officers of the Crown, and they had since been condemned and executed. He believed, that at the very moment that the magistrates of the King's County were declaring that the letter of Mr. Drummond was holding out an inducement to the people to commit crime—at that very moment the Government had issued a special commission for the trial of these murderers in Tipperary. He was happy in being able to state, that at that commission, by the fearless discharge of their duty by the juries, and by the witnesses boldly coming forward, the ends of justice were fulfilled, and the criminals were convicted and suffered for the atrocious crimes they had committed. He anticipated the best effects from the results of the special commission in Tipperary; a clue had been also discovered for the detection of the persons concerned in the series of murders which had taken place in Longford. So long as the present Government was entrusted with the administration of the affairs of this country their earnest attention would be directed to every case that occurred. The most unremitting vigilance should be used to detect; the most careful investigation to sift; the most unswerving, though discriminating, severity, to punish every form of crime and outrage. Hon. Gentlemen opposite might question the policy of Government; this was a matter for the decision of that Imperial Assembly. They might libel its motives; that, give him leave to say, was a matter for their perfect indifference; they would not withdraw their deliberate opinion that property had its duties as well as its rights; nay, more—he felt constrained, from a knowledge of past history, as well as of the present circumstances of Ireland, to impress it more and more, with even a more deliberate warning on all without exception, whether they were the political opponents or the political supporters of Government (for there was no line of political demarcation in this case), that there were proceedings which, while the condition of Ireland continued to be what it long had been, and what he feared it long must be—nay, more, while human nature was what it was —there were proceedings which would beget resistance. There were sufferings which would defy endurance; "The flesh will quiver where the pincers tear." So much he would say in the way of remonstrance, of intreaty—but the course of Government would still be the same. There would be no difference here. The law and the executive recognised no distinction between provocation, and non-provocation; they would with equal vigilance guard, and with equal severity avenge, the landlord whose tenantry, ejected with wantonness and cruelty, pine on the way side, or die in the ditches, as the man whose breast only beats with good will to all around, who only lives for purposes of beneficence, and who is followed to the grave by the tears and regrets of his neighbourhood, like him over the bloody close of whose inoffensive career we have but now been called to mourn. While convinced that the course of the ordinary tribunals had been so far satisfactory, he did not mean to say, but that Government was anxious, wherever it was found that the existing laws were not effective for its purpose, to do what they could to strengthen and amend them. It had already been made the subject of deliberation, and of communication with the law authorities whether some more effective process could not be instituted for searching for unregistered arms, and for recovering even registered arms from the possession of improper persons; but this was a point of very great difficulty in many respects. It was also under consideration, whether it would not be found beneficial to impose a particular assessment on any particular district in which outrage should be found more generally to prevail than in other districts of the respective counties. At present, when the peculiarly disturbed state of any district required the presence of a larger constabulary force than usual, the whole county was assessed to meet the additional charge; but this seemed unjust, and it was, therefore, thought an important point for consideration, whether such district should not be called upon to meet the extra expense itself, a plan which would have the effect of making all the inhabitants of the district additionally interested in putting an end to the disturbances. He was aware, that even under the existing Acts of Parliament, there were powers which had not as yet been carried into effect, but which he should be prepared to employ, should the necessity for so doing become apparent; but he had hitherto refrained from having recourse to those powers, both because there was much of harshness and inconvenience in them towards all the innocent as well as the ill-disposed inhabitants of the proclaimed district, and because they did not appear to him to give any security, against those cases to which the attention of Parliament had been so painfully directed, in which the assassination of an individual was deliberately planned and brooded over, and where the connivance if not the assistance of the neighbouring inhabitants seemed confidently calculated upon. He could not pass over this subject, without paying what he conceived to be a just tribute to a most deserving body of men. He believed that he might say, that the constabulary force was never in a greater state of efficiency, and discipline, and vigour, than at the present moment. He did not say this in disparagement of its condition at any former period; on the contrary, he was fully aware that it had been brought to its present admirable state by the successive efforts of the various distinguished men who had presided over it. The suggestions of the local magistrates with respect to its distribution had been always received with the utmost attention, but the aggregate number of the force could not be increased without a special requisition from the local authorities. It was the full intention of Government to enforce the ordinary provisions of the law in every case; upon an adequate emergency to have recourse to its extraordinary powers, and even to apply to Parliament for fresh powers should they have reason to think that the present provisions of the law were not effective. At the same time, he begged it to be understood, that it was the clear opinion of Government, that any unusual mode of strengthening the law, any departure from the recognised spirit of the constitution, and from its practice, whether as established in this country or in Ireland, ought to be resorted to as seldom, as sparingly, and for as short a period as possible. For any permanent improvement in the condition of the country, for any radical alteration in the worst tendencies and habits of its people, he was confident that it was to far other measures, to far other agency, that Parliament must, and, he trusted, would, be disposed to resort. He would not, on this occasion, run the risk of involving the House in a conflict of opinions on any such measure as the recent Poor-law Act or any analogous measures; but, in concluding the observations he had to offer, he could not conceal his deep-seated opinion, strengthened by all his own as all prior experience, that it was by operating in the first instance on the physical condition of the people, that they might ascend afterwards to cope with their moral one, by creating new links between the employers and the employed, and still more by implanting new habits and new hopes in their own bosoms, by opening fresh sources of employment, and deepening the channels of industry and enterprize; by developing all natural resources, and thus, as it might be said, seconding the intentions of Nature's great Constructor—by such means as these it was, that we should most easily, most effectually, and it might be exclusively, attain the great ends of civil government, secure the reign of social order, and give a fatal stab to the waning forms of savage violence and lawless crime.

Mr. *Colquhoun* disclaimed attributing any undue motives to the noble Lord opposite. Their charge was against the policy of Government. They imputed no motives to the noble Lord but those which became the high and responsible station he held. The noble Lord had taunted his right hon. Friend with making no other motion but a simple call for returns. Surely, before proceeding further, it was desirable that they should know the true state of circumstances so much disputed. The question between her Majesty's Government and the Opposition was one of fact, and they ought first to ascertain the facts. The noble Lord had said that his own Government afforded but one more melancholy illustration in which crime had predominated in Ireland. But there was this distinguishing characteristic between the Government of the noble Lord, and that of all his predecessors, that all other Administrations had used their utmost efforts to diminish crime, regardless of party, and without boasting of tranquillity while the present Administration talked of peace and tranquillity with such a state of things as the noble Lord had been forced to acknowledge, existed in Ireland. A noble Lord in another place had talked of the growing tranquillity of Ireland, and in one of the addresses which had been presented to Lord Normanby on retiring from the Lord-lieutenancy he found the following expressions: — "Under the benign rule of your Excellency, justice has prevailed to an extent unknown before, and tranquillity and security have been extended to all parts of the country." These were the terms in which the Irish Government were lauded, even at the time when the noble Lord opposite had been compelled to acknowledge that there was in Ireland a frightful extent of outrage and crime. The noble Lord had stated, that during the Irish administration of the present Government there had been a decrease of crime and an increase of peace, and to prove the truth of that position, to what documents had the noble Lord had recourse? He had taken the returns of the inspectors of prisons, which he had previously admitted were inadequate for that purpose. [Viscount *Morpeth*: No, no!] The noble Lord had certainly admitted, that there were considerable discrepancies between the returns made by the inspectors of prisons, and those made by the clerks of the Crown and of the peace; and, at all events, his right hon. Friend (Mr. Shaw) had shown the exceeding inaccuracy of those returns. When, therefore, the noble Lord took those returns as a proof of the increasing peace of the country, he was bound to put that proof aside and to deny its adequacy to establish the position which had been assumed by the noble Lord. The noble Lord had then taken the returns from the constabulary officers, and had endeavoured to show, that the number of commitments had increased, and that the number of outrages had diminished. Now, he had not had access to the various documents which the noble Lord possessed, and he was, therefore, obliged to have recourse to those which had been laid on the Table of the House. By one of those returns he found, that during a period of eighteen months, —that was, from July, 1836, to December, 1837—the state of crime at the end of each six months of that period was as follows. The total amount of outrages during the first six months was 843, in the second six months it was 904, and in the last portion of the period he had selected — that was, in December, 1837, it had increased to 1,008. Did that bear out the statement which had been made by the noble Lord? No; the returns which he had alluded to, and which had been laid on the Table by the noble Lord showed clearly that crime was on the increase, and that the number of outrages was not diminishing. But he would take a special case — he would take the case of the county of Longford. What then was the state of crime in Longford? Why, he found, that in that county, crime for a series of years had been gradually increasing. They had the inspectors of prison's returns for the county of Longford from 1828 to 1839, and by those returns he found, that the number of crimes had increased from 323 to 1,136 during that period. The number had gradually increased from 1828 to 1839, and totally disproved the position of the noble Lord, that the amount of crime was decreasing But, passing from those statistics, which were allowed to be most inaccurate and confused, he would proceed to consider the state of Ireland under the administration of the noble Lord. What therefore, had been the state of Ireland under the mild and conciliatory government of the noble Lord? Had there been peace, had there been tranquillity, and had there been security for life and property? Had protection been extended to all, and had there been nothing to defeat the ends of justice? He would proceed to show from the police returns, and from the statements in their own gazette, that, under the Administration of the noble Lord, intimidation had prevailed to such an extent as to defeat, in a great measure, the ends of justice and to secure impunity for crime. The House would recollect, that in a former Session, mention had been made of the case of Murphy, who had been murdered in the county of Tipperary. The case was one of particular atrocity. His murderers had waited for him for many hours in the presence of his wife and children, and in their presence the unfortunate man was murdered. Now, what was the result? Though the murder was thus openly committed, had the murderers been punished? Had evidence been obtained against them, their crime having been so open? No. The wife, — and there was evidence, that she had been an affectionate wife—had said, that she was unable to identify the murderer. She well knew the penalty to which those who gave evidence of crime in Ireland were subjected. She well knew that sort of protection which she would have had, had she been the instrument of punishing these murderers even of her own husband. The children, however, did identify the murderers of their father, and what was the result? They were placed in gaol for protection and to secure their evidence on the trial; but their uncle, the brother of the murdered man, visited them there, and after that visit not one particle of evidence could be obtained from them. What the nature of the conversation between the uncle and the children had been, and what arguments had been used to produce such a result, he would leave the House to imagine. He would next take the case of Slattery, at Emly, for the apprehension of whose murderers he believed a reward had been offered. The murder of that individual hadtaken placein the presence of his wifeand servants, but not one of those who witnessed the crime would undertake to identify those who committed the crime. He would take a case in Clare. A person of the name of Macnamara and sixteen others were indicted for murder, or for outrages on the person. Among the witnesses produced was the widow of the murdered man, who well knew who had committed the crime, but no evidence was adduced sufficient to obtain conviction, and the trial was, in consequence, given up. The case had been tried before Baron Richards, and that learned judge observed, that it afforded a lamentable view of the state of the country where such murders were committed, and where none could be found to bring the offenders to justice. That was the state of Clare; and he would now ask what was the condition of Sligo. In that county a man of the name of Finn was murdered in the year 1837. The crime was committed in the open road and in daylight, but yet no evidence could be obtained to identify the murderers. Another murder, that of Rooney, had been committed in an open street, and in the midst of a crowd, but the people made way for the murderers, and no evidence to identify them had ever been obtained. In Longford there had been ten murders or attacks upon the person, on one estate, and yet only one had been convicted. He would take a single case—the case of Cathcart. That individual had become obnoxious to the people, and in August and December, 1835 he was fired at, and in October, 1837 he was wounded. He saw those who fired the shot, but was unable to bring them to justice, and in the February, 1838, he was again shot at, and killed, but no evidence could be brought forward to identify the murderers. Again, in the case of Brabazon, in Westmeath, although there were five men with him, it was found impossible to identify his murderers and to bring them to justice. The same intimidation, frustrating the ends of justice, prevailed in King's county and in Louth, and indeed throughout the greater part of three provinces of Ireland. In Waterford there was the case of Mr. Keefe, who had been openly attacked while going to mass, but yet not one individual of the crowd who saw the crime could be brought to give evidence to identify the criminals. That those criminals should escape from the penalty attached to their crimes was not to be wondered at. Those who witnessed those crimes, and who were qualified to give evidence against the criminals, well knew the consequence of giving information before a magistrate. They well knew that the intimidation to which they were subjected, in order to defeat the ends of justice, would, should they dare to identify a criminal, be carried a step further, and that they themselves would become victims, There might be a faltering in the law of the land, but in Ireland the law of intimidation was certain, and enforced by blood. The noble Lord had spoken of the cause of crime, and he had attributed its increase to the number of ejectments. Such was the inference to be drawn from the statements of Mr. Drummond and of the hon. Member for Carlow. They were told, that because the landlords ejected some tenants from their property, that that was the reason why crime was so abundant in Ireland. To show the fallacy of that assertion he would read a portion of an analysis of the outrages committed in Tipperary for two periods, one of three months, the other of four months. For three months of the year 1837 there were, by the returns which had been produced, 106 cases of outrage. Of that number sixteen had been outrages committed against landlords; and against labourers and those of the humbler classes, and with what land or ejection could have nothing whatever to do, there had been ninety cases of outrage. For four months of 1838 there had been 155 cases of outrage. Of these only twenty-one had been against gentlemen, and against labourers or farmers there had been 134. But the whole of those outrages on gentlemen were not on account of land. No less than seven out of the twenty-one outrages had been attempted because of refusals to sign petitions or to obtain arms or from other causes of a similar kind with which land had no connexion. But what was the cause of the attacks on the labourers? They were attacked because they presumed to take higher or lower wages than those around them, or for other causes of a like kind. In Thurles a Roman Catholic gentleman had been murdered, but his murder was not caused by a dispute about land. It originated in a dispute about some stolen poultry. He knew other statements were made at the time, but he knew that such was the fact. If they took the case of Meath, or of Westmeath, or of any other county, they would find that ejection was not the cause of outrage, but that the causes of most of those crimes were the robbery of arms, the dismissal of servants, or the giving of information before the magistrates. The noble Lord had thought it his duty to read a lecture to the landlords of Ireland. The noble Lord said the landlords had duties as well as rights, and that they neglected the former; but, had he directed his lectures against those who were the leaders of the people, or those whose duty it was to instruct, and improve them, his remarks would have been more appropriate. Let the noble Lord remember the statement of Baron Richards, at Castlebar, in March, 1838. That learned judge was a Whig, not a Tory judge, and he had said,

> "I cannot but grieve over the depraved character of the people; and I must say, I am persuaded that those murderers are open to instruction, and that if they were properly prepared by the precepts of religion, they could be restrained from outrage. Certainly the people could be humanized, and a heavy responsibility rests upon those men who are their spiritual instructors, should they neglect their duty. Very many murders have been committed by persons on their return from the house of God, and I cannot believe that there they had been taught the precepts of religion, when so soon after leaving they have been found guilty of such crimes."

Now, as a comment on these words of Baron Richards, he would "point the moral of the tale," by narrating a few cases of outrage. The House would remember the case of Allen, which had been mentioned before. That individual had been denounced by the priest. In the case of Coghlan, that individual had been denounced in the chapel, and had, in consequence, suffered death. On the 1st of June, a Mr. Ennis took some land, which had previously been occupied by a priest. He was subsequently denounced by the priest, and had since been murdered. Again, another individual was denounced in Limerick by a priest in 1837, and nearly murdered in 1838. In Leitrim there had been another case of a similar character; and there was also the case of the revenue officer, Reynolds, in the island of Achill. Now, he must say, without casting any general imputation on the Irish Roman Catholic priests, that when the Government was disposed to read a lecture to those who had duties as well as rights, that the observations of the noble Lord ought next to be directed, not to the landlords, but to those to whom the moral and religious instruction of the people was intrusted. The noble Lord had struck out of the returns which were now made, the word "Ribandism;" and he had said, that the utmost vigilance would be used to fathom the Riband conspiracy, as he was persuaded that the longer that conspiracy existed the longer would Ireland be in obtaining tranquillity. If the noble Lord should now pursue that course, he must say that it was a course very different from what had hitherto been pursued. But he had said, the noble Lord had struck "Ribandism" out of the return of crime in Ireland.

What! did the noble Lord mean to say, that Ribandism no longer existed? In the year 1834, there was the last appearance of the word "Ribandism," and since that time the existence of a Riband conspiracy had not been acknowledged in the police returns. He knew the Chancellor of the Exchequer would tell him that the word "Ribandism" had been struck out of the returns in 1834. That, however, was no answer; for if there was evidence of the existence of Ribandism, it ought again to have been inserted. Did the noble Lord mean to say, that because he had struck the word out of the return, he had struck out the actual existence of Ribandism from Ireland? In 1834, Ribandism appeared in all its forms; yet in 1835, they were told that Riband conspiracies were not to be found in Ireland. When a charge had been preferred by a noble Friend of his in another place against Lord Normanby, with reference to this subject, what had been the noble Lord's answer? The noble Lord had denied that there was any secret conspiracy, and alleged that there was none of which he had any knowledge. That declaration had been made by Lord Normanby in December, 1837; yet the noble Lord, the Secretary for Ireland, now admitted his full knowledge of the existence of that conspiracy. Would the noble Lord aver, that it had been slumbering from 1835 to 1837, to break out at once in 1838? In the year 1835, according to evidence which was in the noble Lord's own hands, sworn information was laid before the magistrates of the county of Cavan, and was subsequently laid before his Majesty's Government, pointing out not only the existence, but the whole of the organization, of an extensive Riband Society in that county. In 1836, from the county of Sligo, there was full information upon the same subject sent up to the noble Lord. Was that information vague and unsatisfactory? On the contrary, it was perfectly distinct and explicit. From Sligo, it was subsequently proved to have extended to Fermanagh. In the same year, or in the beginning of the next, the existence of a similar society was discovered in Wicklow, and its organization was most formidable. In May, 1838, the Government received from its own police functionaries in Sligo, intelligence that the attacks made on the mill of a Scotchman named Sim were to be traced to Riband combination. In the gaol of Mullingar, in the county of Westmeath, full evidence was obtained of the existence of a Riband association in that neighbourhood, and sent to her Majesty's Government. From Louth, similar evidence was sent up by the police authorities. He did not know whether his information was correct; but he believed that the answer sent by Mr. Drummond was, "What is Ribandism?" Was it possible, that the Under-Secretary for Ireland could be so ignorant of the state of Ireland for the last half-century as to plead his ignorance upon such a point? Putting such a question to his inferior, an individual employed in the police, must rather be interpreted as a rebuke than as an incentive. He held in his hand, an authentic copy of the Riband signs, oaths, and pass-words, as they had been found in different counties in Ireland. He would not, however, read them, for the noble Lord opposite knew them perfectly well. He would remark, however, that a most singular coincidence was observable in their oaths, signs, &c., throughout the counties of Sligo, Wicklow, Cavan, Louth, Carlow, Queen's county and Leitrim. There was the same swearing to secrecy—the same swearing never to betray their brethren in a court of justice—the same swearing to levy money for the purpose of buying arms—the same swearing of the deepest hatred against all who declined to join in the secret organization. Was this new? The Committee of 1832 had received the most ample evidence on the subject. The swearing and the objects of the conspiracy were precisely the same. The noble Lord seemed to think, that before the year 1838 his attention ought not to have been directed to the subject. Now, a gentleman whom her Majesty's Government would look upon as a most exceptionable witness, a priest named Walsh, resident in the county of Dublin, stated publicly in 1836, that he knew of the existence of an extensive Riband Society in Kingstown and its vicinity upon the subject of the illegality of which he had frequently, but in vain, addressed his flock. The Government he stated to be aware of their existence; and the members of the society boasted that their organization throughout the country amounted to upwards of 200,000. The hon. Member for Dublin had stated in a speech that he had received information of the existence of Riband societies, and that by a single speech of his at Navan, he had put a stop to the existence of no fewer than forty-three Riband lodges. And yet, during all that period, the existence of Ribandism in Ireland was not acknowledged by the Government. The evidence of Mr. Gore Jones, their own stipendiary magistrate, before the Orange Committee in 1835, should have been amply sufficient to convince them of the existence of an extensive organization of Riband societies. He might multiply proofs upon this subject, but he did not wish to weary the House. The noble Lord's Government had taken credit to itself for its activity in detecting and punishing crime. Now, he would refer to a case or two illustrative of this subject. In the county of Clare, in the month of December, 1836, a man named M'Mahon was prosecuted for a very serious assault by a man named Molony. M'Mahon was convicted and sentenced to transportation for seven years. He was liberated, however, after suffering only a year's imprisonment. Such an impression did this transaction produce upon Mr. Wilson, a Roman Catholic magistrate of the county of Clare, that he threw up his commission. He need not allude to the notorious cases of a similar description which had occurred in the King's County. In Sligo two men, during the spring assizes of 1838, obtained a conviction against one John Conway. This person's sentence was not permitted to be fulfilled, and he was also liberated at the expiration of a year. One of the charges which he brought against her Majesty's Government in Ireland was, that where the most notorious individuals were arrested in their career of crime, to such persons was the clemency of the Government extended. What the effect of this must be with reference to the progress of crime in that country, it was for the House to decide. He considered that the restrictions which were placed upon Roman Catholics in Ireland previously to 1829, were most unwise; but he blamed the Government, that when they chose Roman Catholics to fill the official situations which of late years had been thrown open to them, those who were most distinguished as dangerous agitators were preferred to the lovers of peace, order, and tranquillization, while to those who were most notorious for the commission of serious crimes had the clemency of this Government been habitually extended.

Mr. *Pigot* said, that at this stage of the debate he did not feel himself authorized to trespass on the House with any very lengthened remarks; and it certainly was not his intention to enter into a detailed notice of all the observations which had fallen from the hon. Gentleman who had just sat down. He thought, however, that he had an undoubted right to complain of the course which that hon. Member had thought proper to adopt in several portions of his speech (indeed, he might say throughout the whole of it) with reference to the introduction of a very great variety of minute details. He could conceive nothing more inconvenient in a deliberative assembly, nothing that was less consistent with the fair administration of justice, or more wholly incompatible with the advancement of the public service, than upon a motion such as this, for the production of returns, to come forward with long details of individual instances, and call upon those who took the defensive part in the debate for distinct explanations of every one of those cases. When the hon. Gentleman referred to returns which were made by the proper officers—when he founded his statements upon authentic documents—when his calculations were based upon *data*, the accuracy of which was admitted by the parties whom he chose to impeach, or which were at all events acknowledged to be, to a certain extent, correct—when his observations or his arguments (as the case might be) were founded upon documents of this description, he (Mr. Pigot) knew how to meet him, although, indeed, he might say, that he had been met by anticipation. But when the hon. Gentleman took up a file of documents, framed he knew not from what evidence—founded he knew not upon what information, growing out of details he knew now how acquired; and when he challenged so important a result as the condemnation by that House of the whole system of administration in Ireland, on the ground of such statements, the hon. Gentleman must permit him to say, that his premises hardly warranted his conclusion. He was not prepared, nor was it possible for any individual holding the situation which he (Mr. Pigot) did, even had he held it for a longer period, to meet the hon. Gentleman upon all the cases which he had cited in the course of his statements; but it did so happen, that after having heard the hon. Gentleman go through a list of outrages alleged to have been committed in Ireland, and follow each statement by averring that up to the present moment the authors of the crime were not detected; that up to this hour intimidation had prevented the sole competent witnesses from bringing forward their testimony in a court of justice—it did so happen that his memory furnished him with the appropriate fact, that in one of the instances alluded to by the hon. Gentleman there had recently been prepared, and there was now in progress towards trial, a body of evidence which was quite sure to lead to conviction. He would not tell the hon. Gentleman to what case he alluded. He would not imitate his example by naming the individuals charged, and thus putting them on their caution to provide such means as would prevent further evidence from being given. But he believed, from the facts which had come to his knowledge, that the time would shortly arrive when the conviction of the individual whose case the hon. Gentleman had converted into so serious a charge of suspension of the ordinary functions of justice, would take place before the public tribunals of the country. He could say with confidence that the hon. Gentleman's statement was in this respect unfounded, and could falsify the prediction in which he had indulged. The hon. Gentleman had gone a little further, and touched upon other ground, on which it was fortunate that he (Mr. Pigot) could give him some information. The hon. Gentleman, in passing over the various parts of Ireland which he had indulged with this cursory visit, and in which he discovered crime to be so fearfully on the increase, had landed in Thurles, and boldly stated to the House that a series of outrages had occurred in that part of the county of Tipperary, and that not one—for that again was the bold expression of the hon. Gentleman—that not one of those outrages was occasioned by any dispute connected with the letting of land. The hon. Gentleman had referred to the murder of Mr. O'Keefe, and stated, that he believed that murder had no connexion with land. He (Mr. Pigot) would not enter then into the circumstances of that transaction, for reasons which he did not choose to give; but he would ask the hon. Gentleman whether in his multifarious catalogue of crime, he found any record of the murder of a person named Byrne, which had recently formed the subject of repeated investigations. The case to which he now referred was of a very remarkable description, affording a signal illustration of the criminal statistics of the county of Tipperary; and, however culpable the party might be who had committed this crime, this much was abundantly demonstrated—that it arose from a conflict connected with the letting of land, and in transactions of this description, there could be almost universally traced a remarkable similarity in the features by which they were characterized; so far, at least, as regarded the instruments employed to effectuate the horrible crime. It would be useless for him to trespass upon the time and attention of the House with his casual observations on those particular cases (alluded to by the hon. Gentleman opposite), the details of which might chance to suggest themselves to his recollection; and he would permit him to say, that he could not give credence to statements for which he found no foundation in fact. He trusted he would not be considered as presuming too far when he asked the House—he believed, in truth, that he was entitled to ask them—with reference to these statements, to suspend for a little time their judgment until it might be shown whether conviction could or could not be brought home to the offenders. Again, with reference to what the hon. Gentleman had termed the existence and progress of Ribandism in Ireland, it had been the fashion to ascribe all the outrages in Ireland to the existence of those secret associations; it had been the fashion to say, whenever a crime of remarkable atrocity occurred, and great difficulty was found in bringing justice home to the offender, that Ribandism must be the cause. He had remarked in the catalogue of the hon. Gentleman, a catalogue which was evidently prepared with much caution, a catalogue which was the result, no doubt, of many an hour of assiduous labour, he had remarked with amazement, that in this document the name of Tipperary was not to be found. Why did the hon. Gentleman omit Tipperary? Why refer to Tipperary as the favourite spot in which outrage and crime were committed, without referring that outrage and that crime to Ribandism, and yet in the same breath lay to the charge of Ribandism all the crime of the Queen's county? It was known, that the relation between landlord and tenant in Ireland was considered by the people in certain districts to press so heavily upon the latter, that excitement, and exasperation, and secret conspiracies, had been occasionally the consequence. In 1822, for the first time during a series of years, for the last time up to the accession of the present Ministry to power, there was a conviction of eight persons in Dublin for the crime of administering secret oaths. He could tell the hon. Gentleman this, that although very great anxiety had been manifested to reach the members of these secret associations, and although it often happened that justice was brought home to the offenders upon another charge, and for other crimes, a great difficulty was found in establishing a charge of unlawful conspiracy. Perhaps, that was the reason why the hon. Member had not found in any of these police reports any distinct mention of Ribandism; and in whatever hands the Government of the country might be placed, the same difficulty would be found to exist. He would ask the hon. Gentleman, if he would state the number of counties in which he alleged the charge of Ribandism to have been made. The hon. Gentleman had said, that in a number of instances, information had been given to the Government, and without saying more, without specifying any particular case, he now founded upon this a general accusation that the Government had not followed up the information which it had received, and therefore that the Government was answerable for the existence of Ribandism. He would ask the hon. Member, what right he had to say, that in any one of those instances, the Government had not followed up the information which it had received. He would ask him, what right he had to say, that those statements had been proved, and that evidence had been supplied by the magistrates of the country, and that the Government had declined to act upon it. Perhaps the hon. Gentleman might find, that in every instance, an anxious and deliberate investigation had been made, and perhaps he might discover, that the clear and demonstrative proof which was supplied to him by somebody at his elbow was nothing but hearsay. Perhaps it might be found, that the information which had been supplied was not worthy of credit. The hon. Gentleman could not say, that it had not, and he on his own part allowed, that he was not in a condition to prove that it had. If these returns were laid on the Table, he did not think that they would advance the cause of justice, but, on the contrary, would retard its course, as it would prevent the production of testimony and interfere with the course of public justice. The hon. Gentleman, drawing these conclusions from statements thus made, had passed over altogether all that he must have known had been done by the Government of Ireland for the purpose of administering the law. He could not but know, that to the present Government was owing that organization of the police which was admitted on all hands to be so complete and effective. It was to this Government that the system was due, which, as far as could be effected by human agency, brought home conviction to crime, acting as they did upon that central system which it had established, and to which the hon. Gentleman was indebted for the returns which had been made. The hon. Gentleman had said, that, with respect to some of these returns, their inaccuracy was confessed, and, therefore, that these returns ought to be expunged from the consideration of the House. That observation would apply to those returns furnished by the clerks of the peace and clerks of the Crown; but it did not apply to the returns made by the inspectors of prisons, because those returns were checked by the local inspectors of gaols. He would, therefore, tell the hon. Member that to the details stated by the noble Lord, the Secretary for Ireland, no such objection existed; and so far as the system of the Government could exhibit any result as to the state of Ireland, that result was shown by those details.

Mr. *E. Tennent*, after the speech of the hon. and learned Member who had just sat down, could not avoid offering a few remarks to the House. Whatever difference of sentiment there might exist in the minds of different parties, either in the House or in the country, as to individual details of the policy of the Irish Government for the last three or four years, there could be no second opinion as to one universal and manifest result which had flowed from it, namely, the widening of the breach, and the aggravation of those feelings which had so long prevailed, and by amalgamation and social incorporation of the two parties in that country. For the last fifty years every legislative project which had been conceived or brought forward for the benefit of Ireland had been introduced with this recommendation—that by smoothing political asperities, and softening down religious prejudices, it would tend to unite the Irish people in one social compact as the coequal subjects of one and the same kingdom. It was this consideration that had led to the original relaxation of the penal laws in 1778 and 1793, and it was this consideration that had secured the final emancipation of the Roman Catholics in 1829. Whatever prospect there may have been of that consummation being achieved —whatever incipient success may have followed the experiment under previous Lord-lieutenants, it was a deplorable fact, that at the present moment, when the Marquis of Normanby had just taken his departure from his Government, he had left political animosities in more virulent activity, religious differences more marked and distinctive, and the social breach more wide and apparently more incurable than it had been at any period since the union of the two countries. The great majority of that House were amply qualified, from their own recollection and their own observation, to contrast the aspect and composition of the two parties in Ireland, as they exhibit themselves at the present moment, with what they were as they existed in 1829 on the eve of the passing of the Roman Catholic Relief Bill. At that period, and even whilst the great political question of the day was essentially a religious one, large masses of the Protestants of Ireland were found in close union and active sympathy with the Roman Catholics. He meant not merely that liberal section of Protestants whose political sentiments were in coincidence with theirs, but those, Conservatives upon all other topics, who felt that upon that of Catholic emancipation, they were giving their concurrence to a great act of national and political justice. How many of those Protestants, Conservative or Liberal, were now in co-operation with the Roman Catholic party in Ireland, or in connexion with the Precursor Society, which represented them, and which its founder professed to have been instituted for the support of the Ministry and the assistance of the Irish Government? None, or comparatively none. The county returns, printed by that society attested the fact; and proved, that whilst the Roman Catholic counties supplied all its strength, those districts which were essentially Protestant furnished no quota either to its forces or its funds. In the north of Ireland and Belfast, he could state, from his own knowledge, that the liberal Protestants who, up to a very recent period, had been the coadjutors and co-operators with the Roman Catholics on all occasions, had drawn off from them, and formed at this moment a party as distinct as the Conservatives themselves, with their own principles, their own objects, and their own peculiar organs of the press. The Liberal Protestants were no longer found as collectors at the Roman Catholic chapels on tribute Sundays, as before, and the branch of the Precursor Society, which had lately been introduced in that town, could boast, so far as he could learn, the name of but one Protestant gentleman, who, a few weeks since, in transmitting his shilling for enrolment, accompanied it by an entreaty that his name should not be mentioned as a member of such an association. That society was essentially a Roman Catholic one, and with it, or the portion of the people whom it represented, no section of the Protestants, Liberal or Conservative, were in concert or union. Socially and politically, as well as religiously, the great body of the Irish population was, in fact, at the present moment, after the passing of the Roman Catholic Relief Bill, and all the subsequent measures of conciliation, more distinct in their feelings, and more exclusive in their objects and pursuits, than they were ten years ago. A fact, so apparent as this, a failure of policy so remarkable, must be referable to some immediate cause; and that cause could only be discovered in the peculiar favour and countenance with which their leaders and their organs, their wishes and their views, had been fostered and encouraged by the Irish Government, to the exclusion of others. It was that which had given them confidence to conceive, and power to effect their purposes; and it was that which, whilst it taught them to aim at objects peculiarly their own, had so far organized and concentrated their strength, as to enable them to slight and dispense with that aid, of which, in less promising times, they were but too happy to avail themselves, from their Protestant fellow-countrymen. But, whilst he condemned this system of favouritism on the part of the Irish Government, as tending to aggravate prejudices, and to perpetuate jealousies between the Roman Catholics and Protestants, he, by no means, meant to impute to the noble Lord opposite (Lord Morpeth), or to the late Lord-lieutenant of Ireland, that they acted from any personal preference for the abstract doctrines or peculiar views of the Roman Catholics to those of the Protestants; on the contrary, were the circumstances of the two parties reversed, were the Liberal Protestants possessed of the great numerical strength and the preponderating political influence, they would be, he had no doubt, the recipients of courtly favours in return for their services of support, whilst the Roman Catholics, as the unimportant minority, would be excluded as the Protestants now were. But in either case, the error would be equal, and the result the same as that to which we have unhappily arrived—the augmentation of jealousy and suspicion, the fostering of prejudice and party, and the perpetuation of disunion, of irritation, and crime. With regard to the extent and prevalence of crime in Ireland, which was more immediately the object of the motion of his right hon. Friend, it required but little argument to show at once the encouragement and the impunity of offence which must result from this violent "hostility of the two races," in that or any other country in which the institution of trial by jury constituted the people themselves the arbitrators between the injured party and the aggressor. Its least formidable effect in Ireland was to render even substantial justice itself unsatisfactory and suspected, whilst its general result was, to impede the career of justice altogether, and to establish an utter impunity for the worst offences. Such, in fact, were the partialities and sympathies of juries in Ireland at the present moment, that he had recently heard an eminent Irish barrister, of extensive experience, declare, that "human ingenuity could not conceive a more successful device for the security and protection of offenders than trial by jury in the present disorganized condition of society in Ireland." And when, in addition to this infirmity of the system itself, which tended to the prevention of conviction, the House took into account the unwise exertion of the prerogative of mercy by the Lord-lieutenant, which went to annul them, or pardon offenders, when, by chance, convictions were obtained, when the culprits were Roman Catholics, for the House would bear in mind, that it was very rarely indeed, that Protestants were participators in the grace of these enlargements, it would be evident that the administration of justice must now be a mockery in Ireland. Was it then to be wondered at, that the minority in that country felt that the laws and their administrators were not adequate for their protection, or that the majority imagined, that their offences, if not encouraged, were at least winked at, by their rulers. He was far from believing such to be actually the case. He did not bring so heinous a charge against the Irish Government as being the actual suborners of crime, but the charge which he did bring against it was this; the fatal facility with which it yielded to every representation of the Roman Catholic clergy or their followers on behalf of Roman Catholic criminals; thus not only giving a positive impunity to the offenders and depriving the injured party of his remedy and protection, but branding the tribunals of law with needless severity, and writing down the criminal judges of the land as worse than Dracos in the cruelty of their penalties attached to crime. Surely the noble Lord opposite (Lord Morpeth) might discover in the numbers in which these memorials must pour in upon the present Irish Government beyond all precedent in any previous administration, the ease with which, on the slightest success or encouragement these documents could be multiplied *ad infinitum.* He should bear also in mind their *ex parte* character in every instance, as their preparation was kept a profound secret by those who move in them; the first intimation of their existence received by the public, who might otherwise protest against them, being the intelligence of their effect in the liberation of the criminals. Fortunately for him he lived in a portion of Ireland which afforded, from the loyalty and peaceful habits of the inhabitants, but few opportunities for the exercise of the merciful prerogative of the Crown. He could not, therefore from his own knowledge, give to the House any lengthened catalogue of its abuse by the Lord-lieutenant of Ireland; but one instance which had occurred very recently in Belfast he could not withhold, as illustrative at once of the demoralizing effect of these reversals of judgment upon the criminal, and their injurious and exasperating influence upon the complaining and originally injured party. The case to which he alluded was this:—In Autumn last, a Roman Catholic, named Gubben, in consequence of a political quarrel with a Protestant, pursued him, followed by a mob, into the house of a man named Barnett, in which he had taken refuge. Gubben and his followers insisted on his being given up to them, as they were determined to beat him for being an Orangeman. This Barnett refused to comply with, when they commenced an outrageous assault upon his house, which they nearly demolished, destroying and plundering almost every article it contained. For this offence Gubben was tried at the quarter sessions in October last, and Mr. Fogarty, who was then the assistant barrister for the county of Antrim, after hearing the case, sentenced him to six months confinement, expressing, at the same time, his regret, from the atrocious circumstances of the crime, that he could not legally sentence him to transportation. Well, he was committed to the Borough jail on the 27th of October. A memorial was immediately got up by his friends, and within three weeks—namely on the 15th November—an order arrived from Lord Normanby for his unconditional discharge. And now mark the effect. His very first proceeding was to reassemble his mob and return to the house of Barnett, who had given him no other offence than that he (Mr. E. Tennent) had mentioned, where he tauntingly called on him to come out and see him again at liberty, and hoped he would now see the influence enjoyed by his friends in Belfast. From facts such as these it would be superfluous to attempt to draw any inference as to their relative influence upon the minds of the aggressing and the complaining party; but one thing must surely come home to the mind of every individual, that it was utterly vain to look for peace, or tranquillity, or contentment in the midst of a community where matters such as these, were not merely of occasional occurrence, but portions of a system which was in daily and hourly operation. It was the effect of this policy which would render the administration of Lord Normanby long memorable in Ireland, and, above all others, memorable to those who were destined to succeed him in that high office. He had sown the dragon's teeth, and with no niggardly hand: and assuredly those who were to follow him would have to reap the iron harvest. He felt that this was so essentially a question of fact rather than argument, and he saw around him so many of his friends from the south of Ireland more abundantly supplied than, happily, he was with facts, that he should be intruding upon their province were he to do more than express his hearty concurrence in, and his intention to vote for the motion of his right hon. Friend.

Mr. *Villiers Stuart* concurred with the hon. Gentleman in his last observation, that this was a question of facts rather than argument; he would, therefore, refer as a fact to an address to Lord Normanby, on the occasion of his quitting Ireland, which was adopted by a large meeting of the magistrates, gentry, and inhabitants of the county of Waterford, over which the high sheriff of the county presided. They declared their conviction that during the time that the Marquess of Normanby had administered the affairs in Ireland, the laws had been enforced with vigour and dispatch—that crimes had been assiduously detected and promptly prosecuted—that he had exercised the prerogative of mercy judiciously, in a reasonable spirit, and with sober discrimination, and that he was a clever ruler and a just judge. Hon. Gentlemen might give what credit they pleased to this testimony; but it was, nevertheless, the opinion of a very large majority of the people of the county of Waterford. Much had been said of the illegal proceedings of the peasantry of Ireland, whenever the law of ejectment was resorted to; but he would ask the House whether there was not something in the present law of ejectment which, however, well it might work in England, required some alteration with regard to Ireland. It was well known that there existed in Ireland a class of people which did not exist in England, he meant the middle-men. Now, a middle-man might be a very bad tenant, and might very justly be turned out of possession; but in the execution of the writ upon the judgment to turn out the middle-man, the practical effect was to eject, perhaps a hundred individuals who were the tenants of the middle-man. Now, this was a great hardship, because it might be, and no doubt in the majority of instances was, the case, that every one of these under-tenants had paid their rents and fulfilled their contracts with their own immediate landlord, the middle-man. He would submit to the House whether some mode might not be devised for getting possession of the land from the middle-man without making it necessary to turn out these under-tenants.

Colonel *Conolly* was disposed to attribute the unsettled state of Ireland in a great degree to the Riband conspiracy, which emboldened the people to commit acts of violence, particularly when they saw, that that system was countenanced by the Government. The noble Lord had expressed his sympathy for those poor people who were ejected from their holdings and let loose upon society. He felt that the case was a pitiable one, and that ejected tenants were frequently worthy of sympathy; at the same time he could not at all comprehend how the noble Lord, admitting the legal right of ejectment, could sympathize, as he seemed to do, with persons who resisted the ordinary process of the law. If anything had been wanting in the language of Mr. Drummond upon this subject, it had been most completely supplied by the noble Lord. It had become the custom to attribute all resistance in Ireland to legitimate attempts on the part of landlords to recover their own by the force of the law. Now, he wished to know what the intention of her Majesty's Government was respecting the law of ejectment. Did they intend that it should or should not be put in force? He put that question distinctly, because the language of the noble Lord and others was calculated to produce resistance to the due course of the law. He pitied, as well as the noble Lord, the unfortunate persons who suffered from the operation of the law; but it was for the Government to prevent the evil, not by encouraging resistance, but by punishing severely all persons found to be connected with Ribandism, until they totally eradicated the system. Those feelings of sympathy, of which so much boast was made, and which exhibited themselves in the discharge of prisoners from gaols, and such-like acts, while no sympathy whatever was evinced for those against whom or whose property the crimes had been committed, would doubtless make a strong impression on the minds of the ignorant portion of the Irish people, amounting to at least the belief, that Government had in store a large stock of mercy, or, as he would call it, of an abuse of mercy, for the perpetrators of every crime. It was really surprising that this Riband system should meet with such protection from the Government. [*Laughter.*] Hon. Members might laugh, but he asserted that all the endeavours which were made in Ireland to divert public attention from the nature of the crimes committed, and from the real perpetrators of those crimes, by characterizing them as mere agrarian disturbances, was nothing more than a gross delusion got up to screen the Government, and conceal the source of crime. There was no question about it. He had been a good deal surprised at the remarks of the Solicitor-General for Ireland in attempting to reply to the speech of his hon. Friend the Member for Kilmarnock. His hon. Friend had argued ably, forcibly, and legitimately upon well-authenticated facts, which the hon. and learned Gentleman had feebly attempted to controvert by a set of "perhapses." Without adducing a single fact, without telling the House what he did know, and alluding to what he did not know, the hon. and learned Gentleman had resisted by a series of perhapses, the series of facts which the hon. Member for Kilmarnock had exhibited in their true colours, and by which he had shown that the infernal system of Ribandism was the primary cause of all the evils that night complained of; that the great bulk of the Irish people felt, that the Government were favourable to their views; that they heard with compassion of their sufferings, and that they would choose to condemn landlords, magistrates, and every other public functionary in Ireland, rather than quarrel with those from whom they held their places.

Mr. *Fitzsimon* observed, that if the hon. and learned Member for Kilmarnock had read the address which had been presented to Lord Normanby by the inhabitants of Durrow, he would not have made the charge against him, which he had, of want of sympathy with the suffering people of Ireland.

Mr. *Litton* hoped the House would favour him with their attention while he addressed a few observations to them, and he pledged himself they should neither be loud nor long. The charge against the Government was, that they encouraged agitation, and that charge had been, in his opinion, fully substantiated that night. The truth was, that the well-disposed, loyal, and peaceable inhabitants of Ireland considered the present Government inimical to them, while the agitators looked upon it as their friend and supporter. It was not necessary to impute motives to any Gentleman, nor was it his wish to do so, but the House had now admitted facts and documents before them sufficiently abundant to support the charge which he preferred against the Government. Before he proceeded further, he must be permitted to offer one or two observations with reference to what had fallen from his hon. and learned Friend opposite, the Solicitor-General for Ireland. He had often met his hon. and learned Friend on a different arena. They had met often as opponents, but never as enemies. He must say, that with all his hon. and learned Friend's boldness of manner, he had given no answer to any one of the allegations put forth by his hon. Friend, the Member for Kilmarnock, or by his right hon. Friend, the Member for the University of Dublin. The hon. and learned Solicitor-General for Ireland had now, for three years, been intimately connected with the Government. He had filled previously to his elevation to the office to which he had been recently appointed, a situation which, above all others, enabled him to obtain accurate information respecting the state of the country, and yet now, when facts had been stated—when names had been mentioned—when places that were attacked had been pointed out—in short, when the identification was perfect—it did appear to him rather extraordinary, that the hon. and learned Gentleman, holding the responsible office which he did, should be so utterly ignorant of what was passing in Ireland as to be unable, out of the thirty or forty cases which had been brought forward by the Opposition, to give any information whatever respecting them. The hon. and learned Gentleman had said, indeed, that it was not his duty to bring forward circumstances respecting cases that might then be in a state of investigation. He could very well understand, that the ends of justice might be defeated by a premature disclosure of what either was doing or had been done, to bring criminals to justice. But was he to be told, that the Solicitor-General for Ireland—when murder was rife in the land—could not, without betraying trust, and frustrating the ends of justice—give the country some satisfaction as to the course which the Government had pursued. Surely the hon. and learned Gentleman might have told the House—not who it was that was under examination, or what evidence had been given—but he might have adduced some instances in which exertion had been made, and pointed out where it had succeeded, where failed, or in what instances there was a probability of success. But the hon. and learned Gentleman had done no such thing—"It may be a great deal had been done," such were his expressions. If a great deal had been done he ought to have known—he must have known it—and, therefore as he declined to give the House any satisfaction on the subject, he was warranted in assuming, that the case made out by his right hon. Friend, the Member for the University of Dublin, and his hon. Friend, the Member for Kilmarnock, had been fully admitted. He would maintain, that there never was a period, during any former Government in Ireland, characterised by so much crime, with so little of exertion to discover the perpetrators, or where the punishment was so disproportionate to the offences, as occurred during the administration of Lord Normanby in that country. He was not about to enumerate lists of outrages, or to travel over the same ground with his right hon. Friend near him, but he could not pass by that part of the subject, without expressing his conviction as to the deep and lasting injury which Mr. Drummond's ill-advised letter to the Tipperary magistrates had inflicted on the country. He fully admitted, that the Irish landlords had duties to perform as well as rights to maintain, and no man who did not feel the sacredness of those duties was worthy to hold a station in society. But he utterly denied, that the Irish landlords had neglected their duties. From a long residence among them he was enabled to state, that they had not only not forgotten their duties, but had faithfully discharged them. Surely it was most unjust—no matter what rent might be due to a landlord—no matter what annoyance might be given him by his tenant that the moment he exercised the slightest control over his property, he was to be met with allegations of cruelty, injustice, and oppression. If such a course were to be persevered in, he would ask, what was to become of the property of the country. It was too much the habit in that House, and out of it, to stigmatise and denounce the landlords, without in any respect, ascertaining whether or no they were deserving of the censure which had been heaped upon them. He recollected an instance in that House where an hon. Friend of his had been most foully aspersed, and on an investigation it was proved, that, so far from harassing or oppressing his tenants, he had forgiven them thousands. The case made by the noble Lord opposite was, that much of the outrage in Ireland originated in, and appertained to land. It had been said by the hon. and learned Member for Dublin, at a public meeting, that Mr. Weyland had been murdered because he dealt unjustly by persons who held land under him. He would read the words of the hon. and learned Member from a paper which was patronised by him, namely, the *Freeman's Journal:* —"Let the people who taunt unfortunate Tipperary remember the provocation they receive. Weyland took the man's land from him, and would neither give him money nor land. Let it be remembered that the offence was committed on a man who had acted against honesty and the peace of society." The paragraph was extracted from the *Freeman*, and quoted by the *Mail.* The noble Lord, the Secretary for Ireland, imputed the crimes in that county to the same cause; and, in reply to a statement from the Tipperary magistrates, arising out of the murder of this same Mr. Weyland, Mr. Drummond informs them "that property has its duties as well as its rights." For whom was this letter really intended, and for whose use was it specially published? Why for that of an excited population. They had been virtually told by the official organ of the Government—for the letter really amounted to this—that there was no law to punish an oppressive landlord. Could any man doubt what the effects of such a communication must have been in a state of society such as unfortunately existed in Ireland? What effect could it have but to incite murder? A brief space only elapsed after the publication of the letter, when two more murders were perpetrated—namely, on Mr. O'Keefe and Lord Norbury. The noble Lord, the Secretary for Ireland, had said he was proud of the friendship of the hon. and learned Member for Dublin. He was the last man to pry into the private friendships of any individuals—but he did contend that after such a boast the public would be warranted, after the extract he had read from the speech of the hon. and learned Member for Dublin, in believing that the Government agreed in the atrocious sentiments delivered by the hon. and learned Gentleman. Was it, he would ask, becoming of the noble Lord, under such circumstances, to boast of an honoured association with the learned Member? He thought the occasion for putting forward the boast was a bad one and sure he was, that such an association would be viewed with jealousy and distrust by the country. Ireland, by the course which had been adopted by the Government, was a ruined country. It could not be expected that English capital would find its way into it while agitation prevailed there. It had been hoped that the Union would have effected an improvement in that country, and those who now advocated its repeal ought to ask themselves if it were not owing to their own agitation that British capital and British enterprise had been excluded from it. Ireland, owing to that agitation, was without capital and without manufactures; and those who had fortunes in the country had been compelled to become absentees, because neither life nor property were secure. He should conclude by laying down the proposition with which he commenced—namely, that whether willingly or not, he did not wish to impute motives; but would leave the country to judge. But he would repeat that the conduct of the Government was such as to warrant the public in believing that they encouraged agitation — patronised and associated with the agitators—struck terror into the minds of the well affected —excluded British capital, and reduced the country to such a state of demoralization as never was before witnessed in any country having the slightest claim to civilization.

Mr. *O'Connell* thought that this must be admitted to be a most remarkable debate—remarkable, if for nothing else, for the total inapplicability of the speeches to the motion proposed. Any man who had not heard the motion read would never have conjectured, from any thing that had been said, what the matter was to which the motion referred. There was another feature in the debate which ought to be remembered, though he doubted whether it would. Speeches had been made by four Gentlemen, natives of Ireland, who, it would appear, came there for the sole purpose of vilifying their native land—["Oh, oh!"]—yes, of vilifying their native land, and endeavouring to prove that it was the worst and most criminal country on the face of the earth. ["Oh, oh!"]. "Yes, exclaimed the hon. and learned Member, "you came here to calumniate the country that gave you birth. It is said, that there are some soils which produce venomous and crawling creatures—things odious and disgustful; [*cheers*] yes, you who cheer—there you are—can you deny it—are you not calumniators? [" Oh, oh!"] Oh! you hiss, but you cannot sting. I rejoice in my native land—I rejoice that I was born in it—I rejoice that I belong to it; your calumnies cannot diminish my regard for it, your malevolence cannot blacken it in my esteem; and although your vices and crimes have driven its people to outrage and murder—[" Order "] Yes; I say your vices and crimes [Cries of " Order, order," " Chair, chair "]—well, then, the crimes of men like you have produced these results. [" Oh, oh "]. The hon. and learned Member then proceeded: What was the speech of the hon. and learned Gentleman, the Member for the University of Dublin? How applicable to the motion! How happy in its illustration! What was it that the hon. and learned Gentleman quarrelled with? His quarrel with the Government was nothing more nor less than this—that it had been said in a public document that the landlords had duties to perform as well as rights to enforce. Then he quarrelled with the noble Marquess, the late Lord-lieutenant of Ireland, because he had been weak enough, or as the hon. and learned Gentleman would have it, unjust enough, to evince some sympathy and pity for the wretched multitudes who had been subjected to the horrors of summary ejectment; because he had betrayed some feeling towards the decrepid father, the aged mother, and the helpless children, who, driven from the warmth of their homes, were left to perish in ditches. Yes, the noble Marquess dared to pity them; and the Government dared to say, that the Irish landlords had duties to perform as well as rights to enforce. That was the whole ground of complaint. A matter of this kind marked distinctly the character of the people who complained. They said, " We will not be told that we have duties to perform—we have nothing but rights." Did any man ever hear such a complaint made gravely? Yet it had been made repeatedly. The hon. and learned Gentleman (Mr. Litton) made it the chief topic of his speech—he insisted upon it with emphasis—he advanced it with all the powers of his oratory, and claimed the attention of the House to it with many a blow upon the box. He trembled for the box as with uplifted hand and voice the hon. and learned Gentleman exclaimed. " Behold the wrongs of Ireland?—An excited multitude is told by the Government that the landlords have duties to perform, as well as rights to enforce." How did the Government inform the people of Ireland of that fact? How did they seek to inflame their minds upon that point? The hon. Member for Kilkenny (Mr. Hume) moved, as he was often in the habit of doing; for certain returns—for the production of certain papers; and the way in which this inflammatory declaration on the part of an officer of the government was delivered to the people of Ireland was, that it was laid upon the Table of that House. The hon. Member for Belfast (Mr. E. Tennent) had interposed in the course of the debate, and had talked of the evils of change of opinion and the mischief that resulted from the mixture of parties. To be sure, of all men in the world, the hon. Member for Belfast was the one who must be best able to judge of what those evils and mischiefs were, for there was not a political party now in existence to which that hon. Member had not at one time or other belonged. First he was an agitator, then a high Orangeman, than a desperate Reformer.—[Mr. *E. Tennent*: Never!] Not a sworn one. Then he was a Republican—talking loudly of the folly of an hereditary peerage—

" The tenth inheritor of a foolish face"

This was the man who talked of the evils of change. Where was the hon. Gentleman pointing now? He knew not at the present moment; but by and by, when the hon. Gentleman was convinced that the speculation upon which he was now engaged was not likely to be successful he had no doubt he would be seen going over to the Liberal party in Ireland, and joining the Precursor Society. To be sure, if anything were necessary to blacken Ireland in the estimation of England, it would be found in the charity and pity of the hon. Member for Kilmarnock (Mr. Colquhoun). It seemed that that hon. Gentleman had lately been a visitor in Ireland, but instead of directing his admiration to its green hills and verdant valleys, its broad lakes and bold blue mountains, he had employed himself, it would seem, in conversing with the lowest of its inhabitants and picking up a parcel of details to be made the subject of a speech in Parliament. Hence the statement that a village priest had denounced a man before he was murdered—hence also a number of the stories of the same stamp and character. He told the hon. Gentleman that the whole of the details of his speech were false. Could anything be more unfair than the course now pursued? If this were a motion for inquiry, he could understand it. The charges upon which the motion was founded were, if true, charges against the Government. In fairness, then, the Government should have had some notice of them, in order that they might be prepared to meet them. But it was the fashion of the hon. Gentlemen opposite to give only vague and indefinite motions, in order that their antagonists might be taken at a disadvantage. They placed upon the notice book a vague and general motion, then came down with a catalogue of tales, and a list of dates, giving to the whole an appearance of exactness and truth; and then, when the Government, unprepared to go into these details, replied only in general terms, they went away, and complained that they were not met. This was a trick, a party trick, to prejudice England in favour of that faction which had so long oppressed and trampled upon Ireland—foul and malignant murderers—stained by blood, and dishonoured by the breach of treaties—for 300 years making religion the pretext for their crimes, and now again enlisting the sacred name of religion against right and justice. It was said, that the present Government had distinguished none but agitators—had given to none but agitators the emoluments of place—nay, it was said, that they had abused the seat of justice, and placed none but agitators upon the bench. Was Sergeant Ball an agitator. Was Mr. Wolf an agitator. Was Sir Michael O'Loghlen an agitator. These were the last appointments made by the Government, appointments which the hon. and learned Member for Bandon had done everything in his power to prevent. Yet, could the hon. and learned Member for Bandon say that he was not himself an agitator. Had the hon. and learned Gentleman never attended a political meeting? Had he not attended a meeting at Cork upon the subject of the Reform Bill? [Mr. Sergeant *Jackson:* No.] Then the hon. and learned Gentleman's memory must be very short. At all events that meeting was attended by a Counsellor Jackson, who spoke upon the occasion. The hon. and learned Member for the University of Dublin had detailed a long list of horrors in Longford; but had the House heard of the late trials at Longford—had they heard of the trial of a widow named Murphy; an action of ejectment was brought against her; Mr. Courteney, a gentleman of respectability, was introduced as a witness. There was no doubt of the facts that the widow had a lease of the house, of which forty years were unexpired. She was the administratrix of her husband, and was in possession of the house. Of these facts there was no doubt. She was required to give up the lease, but refused to do so. What was to be done? The witness Courteney stated in his evidence that the landlord took a party to tear the house down—that the widow and her daughter were borne screaming and weeping away, and that the son at last signed a paper which he was assured should prevent his widowed mother's house from being levelled with the ground. But the assurance was a false one. The signing the paper did not prevent the perpetration of this piece of iniquity—the house was torn down, and the widow erected a hut from its remains. Afterwards, the case went to trial upon the ejectment, and the widow got a verdict. There was the Lord Lorton that they had heard that night lauded to the skies—there was the verdict of the jury—there was the Mrs. Murphy with her house torn down over her head, and there was also the cause of the disturbances in the county of Longford. The learned Recorder had told them of the number of murders which had lately taken place in Ireland, but the number given by the learned Recorder was fourteen since the 16th November; but if the learned gentleman had called their attention to England, he would have found that there had been twenty-five since the 16th November, leaving no less than eleven to the credit of Ireland, and yet no English Member had risen, and said " what an abominable country mine is, what shocking people are the people of England." Besides, these murders, however, there had been two cases of supposed murder, that is, where bodies had been found in a mutilated state; there had been thirteen distinct attempts to commit great personal violence, and there had been twenty incendiary fires, one of which by-the-by was at Shaw, in Berkshire; the learned

Recorder, in his list, could not enumerate a single incendiary fire, and notwithstanding this, Ireland was to receive abuse, and above all, the abuse of her own children. He had calculated the number of crimes in England of the greatest enormity—those which had been punished with imprisonment above six months—and he found that the number in Great Britain was 6,259, whilst the total number in Ireland was only 2,577, though the population in Ireland was within a third as much as the population in England. He only asked those hon. Members to apply the same charity to Ireland as they extended to England; and if there were better stimulants to crime in Ireland, if there was in that country no general sympathy between the rich and the poor, if the inhabitants were considered aliens in their own country, by those who abhorred their religion, let no censure be passed on the Government which, for the first time within the recollection of the people, administered the law fairly and impartially with every class. [*Cheers.*] Hon. Members might cheer; but if the Government had not done so, let hon. Members point out a single crime in which, as to the Government, there had been any defect. Let them trace up the neglect to its source—let the returns be laid on the Table of the House—and then, if the Government were not able to vindicate themselves, they would not be vindicated by him. Why, in another place, a noble Duke had admitted, and so had the Earl of Glengall, that no Government had in this respect been more vigorous in the execution of its duty. Was there any complaint, that, on the trial of a Protestant, the jury had been packed, as it had been complained against hon. Gentlemen opposite, when they had been in power, and as there would be, if they were in power again? The right of challenge gave a frightful power to the Crown; but since the present Government had been in office, they had followed the English practice, and no man was now set aside on a jury pannel on account of his religion, or on account of his political opinions. And what had been the result? Had a single case failed? On the trials at the late special commission there were seven Catholics on the jury—or seven Precursors, if that term pleased the noble Lord better—and there were but five Protestants, and yet there had been convictions. The learned Gentleman (the Recorder, had read an extract from a speech said to have been delivered by him (Mr. O'Connell) having relation to Lord Oxmantown: it was a double-distilled extract, for it had gone through the alembic of the *Evening Mail*, after it had appeared in the *Freeman's Journal*, and, as it last appeared, it was totally misrepresented. The right hon. Gentleman produced this report, which he called his speech; but what he did speak, he would repeat. What had Lord Oxmantown done? He was the Lord-lieutenant of the county; and he called a meeting, under pretence of discovering the assassin, but for the real purpose of expressing the vilest and the most atrocious calumnies that were ever uttered against his country, and against the Government who had named him as lord-lieutenant, and whose commission he then bore. He was seconded by Lord Charleville—not very ably certainly, which that poor nobleman could not help; but this same Lord Charleville had an admirable method of forgetting matters of fact. He stated, that two men came out of the lodge, saying, that Lord Norbury had been mortally wounded, and was dead, when, on referring to the evidence of the lodge-keeper, it appeared, that she had just told them what had happened, and that one of them, so far from rejoicing at the circumstance, as it had been stated, being an old soldier, offered his services to stop the flow of blood, and to staunch the wound. The noble Lord had treated the whole Irish nation as a nation of assassins. He had treated the Irish Catholic clergy as a body of men fomenting assassination; he did not even except Lord Norbury's own friend, and his (Mr. O'Connell's) friend, the Rev. Mr. Rafferty, and even he was thrown into the base accusation of calumny. He (Mr. O'Connell) had been happy to hear the explanation respecting the boot-mark the other evening, and he, after inquiry, was now able to confirm the statement, that it was the mark of the shoe of Mr. Fitzgerald. Hon. Gentlemen opposite had stated, that it was the mark of the shoe of Lord Norbury's grandson, but it was his impression that in this they were mistaken. The point did not much signify in their present discussion, but if hon. Gentlemen wished him to go into it, he was perfectly ready to do so. Lord Oxmantown had said, that this was a conspiracy to turn the landlords out of their property, but could any thing be more absurd? Was there not a son of Lord Norbury perfectly ready to step into the property at once—and nothing could be gained by the peasantry. He did, therefore, speak of Lord Oxmantown as he thought he deserved. He was of opinion, that this was an attempt to blacken Ireland by those who had hitherto delivered her over to the dominion of a faction. It was an attack upon the noble Lord, under whose Government, for the first time, pure and impartial justice had been administered. The noble Lord had earned the approbation of Ireland, the universal people applauded his acts, and he came back to this country with all the honours of a civic triumph! [*Hear! hear!*] What! did hon. Gentlemen think that it was not a civic triumph, without the presence of slaves? He congratulated the country on the character of the successor the noble Lord was about to have; he trusted that his successor would follow the example of the noble Marquess, and work out the cure of Ireland's wrongs. He concluded by moving, that, after the word "Ireland," there be added the words, "also similar returns for England, Wales, and Scotland."

Mr. Sergeant *Jackson* requested the indulgence of the House only for a short time, whilst he made a few observations in answer to the attack which had been made upon him by the hon. and learned Gentleman who had just sat down. That hon. and learned Member had asked him whether he had not attended a meeting held in the county of Cork in the year 1828, and there made a speech against Catholic emancipation; and he would answer him, that never, in the county of Cork or elsewhere, at a Brunswick or any other meeting, had he made any speech against Catholic emancipation. Had the hon. Gentleman known him, he would have known, as his (Mr. Sergeant Jackson's) friends well knew, that his opinions were favourable to Catholic emancipation in 1828; but with the experience he had had of late years, and a knowledge of the lamentable events which had occurred in certain quarters, were the question now before the Legislature, he should ponder well ere he gave his vote for that measure. But the hon. and learned Member was not very cautious in his allegations as to points of fact, and he would get over this mistake in some way or other, by saying, then if it were not he (Mr. Sergeant Jackson), it was some other counsellor Jackson. There was, however, only one gentleman of that name besides himself at the bench, and that was Mr. Warren Hastings Jackson, who he believed, had never attended any such meeting or made any such speech. But, if he had made such speech, was that any justification of the hon. and learned Member to make such a charge against him for doing so? Nor was this the only instance of the hon. Member's departure from accuracy in the speech which he had made; and although the hon. Member had spoken of wandering speeches having been made on the Opposition side of the House, he would ask whether any one ever heard such a rambling speech as that of the hon. Member himself? Had he not, too, besides the charge against him, imputed to his excellent Friend on his left hand (Mr. Colquhoun) a whole string of assertions, not one of which was true; the hon. Member had also appealed to him whether he had not made some charge against Sir Michael O'Loghlen. Now, unfortunately, he had not had any intimacy with that gentleman since his promotion; but he would agree with the hon. Member that he was as excellent, upright, honourable, and able a judge as ever occupied a seat on the bench, and he would say that he had never made a charge against him. With respect to the present Lord Chief Baron of Ireland, too, he would say that he had never spoken one word against that individual, and he believed him, and always thought him to be an amiable, kind-hearted and excellent man; nor had his hon. Friend said one word in disparagement of him. But let him tell the House that the hon. and learned Gentleman had made a most—he was about to use what might be considered an unparliamentary phrase—a most audacious attack on the noblest and the highest persons in the country. He had attacked Lord Oxmantown, who was as kind and good man as any who ever adorned society; he had professed most liberal principles, and although he had retired from society, yet when his county was in a distracted state, when blood was flowing, and a brother nobleman was slaughtered without cause, when he came forward at a public meeting of his county, as it was his duty to do from his office of Lord-lieutenant, and had drawn down upon him these foul-mouthed and atrocious attacks—which the hon.

and learned Gentleman was ever so ready to make on those who happened to be his political opponents. The next person the hon. and learned Gentleman attacked was Lord Charleville; but the character of that nobleman required no defence at his hands, and those who are acquainted with him would know how to estimate those slanders upon him. The hon. and learned Gentleman had spoken of a comparison between the crimes committed in England and those committed in Ireland; but if any atrocious crime took place in England, did not every man turn out to bring the murderer to justice, and render him amenable to the law? Now, what was the case with Ireland? What was the state of crime in that country? Let them compare it with that of Great Britain. The population of Great Britain was 16,500,000, and during that year the crimes of murder or attempts at murder in England, Scotland and Wales were in number 277. In Ireland during the same period, with a population of only 8,000,000, the crimes of murder or attempts at murder were 718. And he would venture to say, that from the beginning to the end of the rambling speech of the hon. and learned Member, there was not one single matter of fact truly stated. The hon. Gentleman had also spoken of packing juries in Ireland under former Governments to the present one, but he would deny the charge; for the instructions given by the late Attorney-General of Ireland (Mr. Blackburn) to all the Crown Solicitors of Ireland, were, not to put aside any man on account of his religion, unless there was reason to suppose, that he would not advance public justice. And this rule the present Government had laid down over and over again as the rule they adopted now. Yet, although this was said to be the case, there were last year in the unfortunate county of Tipperary, 170 cases of homicide tried at the two assizes, and yet there was not one conviction. In one case, the man had offered to plead guilty if they would allow his body to be delivered up to his friends, but this being refused, he was tried, and no verdict was the result. He would ask his hon. Friend opposite (Mr. Pigot), whom he was glad to see in his place, whether, although his hon. Friend was a member of a society which he (Mr. Sergeant Jackson) told him he thought was an illegal society, he had made those observations in any other than a friendly manner? He could assure his hon. Friend, that although he had differed from him, he had not the slightest unkind feeling towards him. And yet this had been a charge against him, and the hon. and learned Member in his usual style, and with his usual accuracy, had attacked the character of an hon. Friend of his, when he was absent and not able to defend himself. He spoke with reference to the packing of juries, and he would ask whether the rule he had mentioned was the rule now? Was it not the same as packing juries when a man was allowed nineteen peremptory challenges? But he thought neither the noble Lord near him, nor his hon. Friend, would now venture to go into Tipperary and try prisoners with such juries. In that county lately a special jury was summoned and they did their duty, but they were all grand jurors. [Mr. *Sheil*, that was not the case.] If the hon. and learned Gentleman says the fact were not so, he of course bowed to his authority; but he spoke on information which he believed to be true. But what he meant to say was this, that the grand panel was summoned by the sheriff, and the juries were therefore composed of gentlemen eligible to serve on the grand jury. Certain returns had been made to the House, but his charge against them was, that they were grossly defective, deceptive, and delusive, and no safe conclusions could be drawn from them; and because his hon. Friend had wished for them to be made out *in extenso*, he had been taunted with not moving for an address to the Throne for the dismissal of the Government. On this point probably some steps might be taken as to the executive government of Ireland, for there were serious questions relating to the government of that country for the last four years. He would say, that in the documents before the House the facts were incorrect; that the returns were fallacious, even on the authority of the noble Lord opposite himself. [Lord Morpeth here said, "I admitted they were not correct."] The noble Lord says they were not correct, and was not that the same as incorrect, and that, therefore, they were fallacious? But what was the case against the Irish Government? They said, that they had administered the law in Ireland with vigour and impartiality; but he should like to see any man holding up his head, and stating that in that House; he thought he could satisfy a very large proportion of the other as well as his own side of the House, that that was not the case. The great characteristic of the Government was anything rather than impartiality or vigour, for it appeared to him, that the Government had acted uniformly to depress and lower one party, and to strengthen and reinforce the opposite party, in that country. What he complained of was, that the Irish executive had wielded their patronage so as to depress the one party, and to raise up the cause of the agitating part of the community. Let him look to any class in his own country, to his own profession for instance, and then it was not sufficient to entitle a man to be advanced by the Government, that he was perfectly capable, of high professional attainments, unimpeachable in his private or public character, a perfect neutral in politics; but he must be a partisan, and must lick the dust from the feet of the agitators, in order to be promoted. As an instance of a wish on the part of the Government to propitiate certain parties, he might mention his friend Mr. Sergeant Green, than whom there was not a more eloquent man, or one of higher character at the bar, who took no part in politics; and although he had been sent on the circuit during the absence of the ordinary judges, yet he had not been promoted. His friend, however, had attended the levees of the noble Marquess, although he hardly knew any other person who had done so. They might call that ridiculous, but it was so; for neither the nobility nor gentry of the land, nor the leading men of the bar had attended the levees of the Lord-lieutenant, although, of course, that respect would have been paid to the Government had their conduct entitled them to it. But how had the noble Marquess entered the city of Dublin? At the head of a mob, with green banners, flying, bearing seditious mottoes, and preceded by an Irish harp. With respect to some other situations, whom had they appointed Filacer in the Court of Exchequer? Mr. E. Power, who, as an attorney for the defendant in the tithe action of "Higgins v. Conroy," got up an answer so full of irrelevant, disgraceful, offensive, and contemptuous matter, that the court ordered, by its unanimous judgment, that it should be taken off the file, and that the attorney should pay out of his own pocket all the costs; that Mr. E. Power, who had been guilty of such an outrage on common decency, the Government thought proper, in furtherance of the administration of justice, to appoint their filacer in the Court of Exchequer. Who else had been appointed? A gentleman who had been a Member of that House, Mr. O'Dwyer, had also been appointed another filacer. Mr. P. Costello, a respectable man, no doubt, but a bad politician — an extreme politician—an agitator—a member of the various agitating associations—was appointed clerk of the rules in the court of Queen's Bench. Mr. Pigot a member of an association whose object was to carry on a formidable war against tithes, and to collect money for that purpose, himself a subscriber to that fund, was appointed confidential adviser to the Lord-lieutenant in the most delicate class of cases that could be submitted to the consideration of the Government. Could the clergy have confidence in a Government which acted in such a manner? Then, with respect to the noble Lord who had just been appointed Lord-lieutenant of Ireland, he was ready to admit, that his character stood as high as it was possible to stand, and yet his appointment was one of the most unsuitable that could have taken place, on account of the language he had used in his place, when a Member of that House. Instead of reconciling the people of Ireland to the appointment, the high character of that noble Lord might only tend to render him the more dangerous. For it would be impossible to suppose, that the Roman Catholics, seeing a noble Lord appointed Viceroy in that country, who had declared his anxiety to support a certain bill because it would render the war against tithes more formidable, could feel, that they were doing wrong, in doing their utmost to weaken and curtail the Church Establishment. There had also been great partiality in the conduct of the Government with respect to the constabulary. The House had been led to think, when the bill for remodeling that force was about to pass, that Colonel Shaw Kennedy would be intrusted with its management, and that his recommendation would at least be the medium of advancement in that corps. But what was done when a stipendiary magistrate was to be appointed some time ago in Ireland? There were thirty-two sub-inspectors one in every county; yet an individual named Nangle, who had the good fortune to bea relative of the hon. and learned Member for Dublin, not even a sub-inspector, but merely a chief constable, was appointed over the heads of the thirty-two officers, sixteen of whom were magistrates at the time. The effect of this was to show, that the patronage of the Government was exercised for the purpose of propitiating a certain party in that country. Indeed, so extensive was that impression, that the hon. and learned Member for Dublin himself, in a speech recently delivered at a meeting of the trades' union, said there was not a single place under Government which he had not been asked to procure for some of his friends—from the command of a seventy-four, and a seat on the bench—to the office of chimney-sweeper in the castle; so that it would take him ten days to answer all the applications which were made to him in one morning. That impression was general throughout Ireland; it extended even to the learned profession, of which he was a member, and there could not be the slightest doubt of the fact. He gave due credit to the Government for their appointments to the sees of Kilaloe, and Cashel, fitter and better men in every respect could not have been selected; those appointments showed, that when the Government were free to act, they would select proper men to fill vacant situations; but they dared not trench on the department of the hon. and learned Member for Dublin; if they did, they knew the consequences. He charged the Government with partiality in their mode of dealing with illegal associations. He did not vindicate Orangemen, or Orange processions—how far the Orange association was a necessary defensive association was a much mooted question in a committee upstairs; but if Government found it necessary to put down Orange associations, they should have dealt even-handed justice, and put down other illegal associations also. They marched down armies into the north of Ireland, and provoked collisions with the people, in order to prevent men walking with ribands on the 12th of July, but the Riband association was not checked. No sooner had the Orangemen of Ireland, in obedience to the expressed wish of their Sovereign, disbanded, than it was deemed prudent to allege, that no Riband societies existed in Ireland. Did Riband societies not then exist? Not only did they exist, but they were becoming more rife every year; and at this very moment the country was covered with them. The Government had not exerted themselves to put down that atrocious and treasonable conspiracy in Ireland. What was the conduct of the Government with respect to other associations? The effect and object of the Catholic, General Volunteer, and Precursor societies were to keep up a perpetual ferment in the country; and if not to lead to ulterior mischief to aggrandize a mean, selfish, and miserable influence, by preying on the misfortunes and wretchedness of a poor and deluded peasantry. The Government allowed such proceedings to take place under their very nose, at the very gates of the castle. Nay, more, the leaders of the Precursor Society were received at the tables of the Lord-lieutenant and the chief Secretary for Ireland. How had they behaved towards the rest of the noblemen and gentry of Ireland? Lord Oxmantown had presided at a meeting in the King's county, assembled for a most legitimate purpose, and honestly expressed his sentiments; his right hon. and learned Friend (Mr. Shaw) had stated their conduct to that nobleman. What was the conduct of the Government with regard to another Lord-lieutenant of a county? The Marquess of Headford was still permitted to occupy a place near the person of our Queen, although, as Lord-lieutenant of the county of Meath, he had the hardihood to convene and preside at a meeting for the purpose of agitating for the abolition of tithes, the Imperial Legislature having just passed an act for the purpose of settling the tithe question. Was that impartial conduct? The hon. and learned Sergeant then reverted to the subject of riband associations. They had been told that the evidence was vague and uncertain with respect to the existence of Ribandism in Ireland. He maintained, on the contrary, that it had existed extensively and continuously for a great number of years, and that it never was more rife than at the present moment. The hon. and learned Gentleman then read the forms of a Ribandman's oath and of his ticket, as already given in the speech of Mr. Shaw. This he had got from a Member of a noble family, the magistrate who had taken the deposition of a person who had been a sworn Ribandman. The deponent before that magistrate added, that there was not a Roman Catholic from twenty to fifty years old who was not a member of the society. Of course he spoke of his own part of the country, and of persons of his own class. In a recent trial at Drogheda, of some persons charged with having seditious papers in their possession, it was shown that those papers had the same quotations from Scripture which were on the Ribandman's ticket. Similar documents had been taken from prisoners committed to Mullingar gaol, and recently from others in a remote part of the county of Wicklow. Copies of some of these had been forwarded to Mr. Drummond in Dublin. In the papers found in Wicklow it was asked, "What do you think of the Precursor Society?" and the answer was, "It is a loyal step, it is for the rights of Ireland, and we should join them." It was a curious fact, that all these documents contained allusions to the rebellion in Canada, as if "Justice to Ireland," as it was called, was to be obtained in the same way. In the committee on Fictitious Votes a Roman Catholic priest was examined, who candidly admitted the existence of Ribandism in the county of Longford. The hon. and learned Gentleman went on to show that there had been a republican party in Ireland for a long time; that the Roman Catholic Association had a republican tendency as was proved by the work published by Mr. Wyse on that association. That Gentleman stated that the association would laugh at anything but self-government, and that republicanism and separation were the two head articles of their political creed. The Roman Catholic priests, for the greater part—almost the whole—were members of these associations. They had been members of the Catholic Association, of the General Association, and of the Precursor Society. They held the office of churchwardens under one, of pacificators under another association, but they were actively engaged in support of all. On one occasion by their means 1,500 simultaneous meetings were held through the country, and it was calculated that on an average 1,000 persons attended each of these, so that there was not less than one million and a half of persons brought at once within the influence of the association, and they were taught to be ready at a moment to obey its orders. It was only, it was said, a bit of paper and twenty-four hours, and there could be obtained a simultaneous assemblage of 1,500,000 men through the country. In this sort of agitation the hon. and learned Member for Tipperary (Mr. Sheil) had himself taken no little part. To show how the democratic principle was inculcated, he would read an extract from a speech of the hon. and learned Member for Dublin on the 18th of last month, and he begged the attention of English gentlemen to it. The hon. and learned Member said, in addressing the Precursor Society, that there had been great agitation about the Corn-laws; that he would vote for their repeal, because it would put down the aristocracy, and would tend to establish the democratic principle—that principle which was, that Governments were made for the people, and not the people for the Governments. The hon. and learned Member for Dublin had denounced him (Mr. Jackson), and some of his hon. Friends, as having come over here to vilify their country; whereas they only stated facts, which had not been denied, in order to let this country see what the actual condition of Ireland was. He would next beg the attention of the House to an extract from another speech of the hon. and learned Member for Dublin, as reported in the hon. Member's own paper, the *Dublin Register:* "Ireland," he said, "had been insulted, but Irishmen would not bear the foul indignity. He never laid his head upon his pillow at night without fervently desiring to make another effort for his country. He was then getting into 'the sear and yellow leaf;' but if he was old his heart was young, and his arm was still sufficiently powerful to be raised, if necessary;" and he added, "I would rather that the rivers of Ireland were red with Irish blood than that Ireland should be again degraded." In another speech, delivered at Carlow, the hon. and learned Member spoke out plainly and talked coolly of the shedding of blood, as a means, no doubt, for it would bear no other meaning, of obtaining what was called justice for Ireland. Yet he (Mr. Jackson) had never heard, that any notice had been taken of that speech by the Government of Ireland, or that Mr. Drummond had been directed to write letters expressing the dissatisfaction of the Lord-lieutenant at such language as the following:—"Men of Carlow, are you ready?" "Aye, Aye." "I am not for the shedding of blood, but when all the other means fail, we have no other resource; when all the other means which I have spoken of fail, I am for the shedding of blood. I say this, because if your enemies get into power they will shed your blood." After adverting to the banishment to a distant and lonely part of Kerry of Mr. Vignolles (who reported this language to Government), and also to the resignation of Colonel Shaw Kennedy, the Inspector General of the constabulary force in Ireland, because he had not been properly supported by the Government, which, in those instances, had been acted upon by some secret influence, the hon. and learned Gentleman went on to say, that though the Member for Dublin might have the priests and a certain portion of the Catholic population with him, he had, by no means, the respectable portion of the Roman Catholics of Ireland at his side. On the contrary, the great majority of the respectable Roman Catholics were decidedly opposed to the hon. Member and to his plans, and when he had the audacity to threaten those opposed to him with his seven millions, he would find himself greatly mistaken, if he calculated on the support of the Roman Catholic gentry of Ireland. As a proof that the hon. Member had not the support or sanction of that class, he might mention one fact. The entire of the contribution to the Precursor Society from the province of Connaught, the most Catholic part of Ireland, was only *55l.*, 10*s.*, while, from a single county of Munster, (that of Tipperary), the contribution was 650*l.* What was the cause of this difference? It was this, that the principal part of the lands of Connaught were the property of Roman Catholics; the great body of its landowners were of that persuasion, and would not allow their tenants to take a course which they believed to be wrong; but the Protestant landlords were not allowed to exercise that influence over their tenants. The hon. Member for Dublin talked of moral force; but he more than insinuated his reliance on physical efforts. He talked of 8,500,000 souls—" ay, and bodies too"—and, in the same breath, asked, " whether they would be willing slaves: oh, no." Much stress had been laid upon what was said to be the vigorous administration of the law in Ireland. How had that been shown? Would the House believe that not fewer than 1,173 convicted prisoners had been discharged in the course of two years before the expiration of their sentences? Of these, thirty-seven were sentenced to death, thirty-three to be transported for life, and sixty-three for seven years. There were discharged on that tour of popularity, in the latter end of August, 1836, no fewer than 284 prisoners. By the order of the Lord-lieutenant, no fewer than 110 were discharged by his mere oral order. Was not this monstrous? Suppose her Majesty were to make a tour through the country, and were to order the prison-doors to be opened, and to enlarge 110 prisoners without a written order? Why, England would ring from end to end with indignation. He did not hesitate to say, that any Minister, who so advised her Majesty to open the prison-doors, would be impeached. But was not this infinitely worse in Ireland in its distracted state? What was produced on the minds of the people by this? The people imagined they had friends in the Government, and that they should go scathless, if they but opposed those who were inimical to the Government. In six counties in Ireland, in August, 1836, there were no fewer than 179 prisoners so discharged. They had another return, showing the number of rewards offered for the apprehension of offenders in eleven months. The number of rewards offered was 593. Out of that number ninety-three had been claimed; or, out of the sum of 25,000*l.* offered, 1,000*l.* had been claimed. [*An hon. Member:* that is a great deal.] What! only four per cent. in a poor country like Ireland? Did not that fact speak trumpets as to the state of Ireland? It showed the existence of conspiracy, he thought, and of intimidation, and that the people could not be induced, even by enormous rewards, to bring offenders to justice. There were, in 1836, in one county, twenty-five murders, twenty-five persons fired at, and three clergymen's houses fired into. The noble Lord spoke of few turbulences. Here, in his own proclamation, in 1836, there appeared to have been two clergymen fired at, three clergymen's houses fired into, twenty-one houses entered, and twenty-one houses burnt, in one county. In 1837, there were 290 rewards offered for similar offences. The hon. Gentleman had called on him to read: he would read. He had a great many cases. He wanted to detail one case, which he should state as shortly as he could. A married man, about sixty years of age, came to the house of a woman residing within a few miles of Dublin.

Finding the woman out, and her daughter in the house, he made an assault on her, and abused her in a most dreadful manner. The capital offence was not proved against him, but he was tried, and convicted of an aggravated assault. This man had been tried in August last. The judge regretted that he could not pass a heavier sentence upon him, and sentenced him to be imprisoned for two years to hard labour. It appeared that this man was employed as a collector at the door of a Catholic chapel, and exertions were made to obtain his pardon, and he was enlarged after this assault without giving bail. [" Name."] His name was Connor. With regard to the state of the clergy of the country parts, he would read just one case, and it was the last case he should trouble the House with. It was the case of a clergyman in the county of Limerick. He wrote that he had just had a visit from some of O'Connell's supporters. The letter was to the effect that his dear Eliza had been obliged to give up nursing her infant, owing to fright, and had been obliged to get a nurse for her child. [*Laughter.*] They would find it was no laughing matter. The letter went on—they had been obliged to dismiss the nurse they had, who was a Roman Catholic, from intimidation. A large crowd of persons beset his house, and persisted in seeing him. On the door being opened, a large volley of stones was thrown in, which fell near his dear Eliza's head. The windows were broken, and the stones fell in the nursery. On getting his wife and children up stairs, he inquired from a window what they wanted; and they said they came by Captain Rock's directions, and they would have him discharge his Protestant servants. And when he told them that he would not, they warned him to take notice and do it; that this was the first visit of Captain Rock, and he might shortly expect another visit, if he did not send his Protestant servants away. The servants were both Protestants, and one of them was a convert from the Roman Catholic faith. He was determined to keep his servants, and was just going to procure timber to secure his doors and windows. This was the state to which the country was reduced by combinations. What had been the conduct of the Government, then, again, on another subject—what had they done with regard to the sheriffs, in 1836? In eight counties the sheriffs had been passed by; in 1837 seven counties had been passed by, and the returns of the judges did not appear. This was an evasion of the statute law of the land: the effect of all these proceedings on the part of the Government—this total want of vigour—this partial conduct which they had pursued. They were, in fact, subservient to the hon. Member for Dublin: they held their places by his sufferance. They were favourable to those who were alike enemies to all; and the notion of that, however erroneous, was very common, and had naturally been followed by disturbances in the country.

Debate adjourned.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Friday, March 8, 1839.

Minutes.] Bills. Read a first time:—Transfer of Aids.—Read a third time:—Ecclesiastical Pluralities Restriction.

Petitions presented. By Lord Kenyon, from Bridport, for the Repeal of the Corn-laws.—By the Marquess of Bute, from a number of places, for Church Extension in Scotland.—By the Bishop of London, from Colchester, and other places, against any Grant to Maynooth College.

Canada.] Lord *Ellenborough* said, that the noble Earl the late Governor General of the North American provinces, in reply to an address of the inhabitants of Toronto on the ninth of October, stated that he had issued commissions for inquiry, not only upon the subject of crown-lands and emigration, but also upon the subject of municipal institutions and general education. The reports of the commissioners upon crown-lands and emigration had been received: but no information had yet been furnished with respect to municipal institutions and general education. Further it appeared, that in the proclamation of the noble Earl (Durham) dated the 9th of October, the noble Earl said, he regretted very much to renounce the hope of employing unusual legislative powers for the endowment of these provinces with municipal institutions, and a general system of education. He (Lord Ellenborough) wished to ask the noble Marquess whether he had received any such materials as the report of the commissioners would afford for future legislation upon these important topics. One of the matters to which these materials for future legislation referred was undoubtedly that which, in his opinion, was by far the most important, namely, a measure for giving to the Canadas competent tribunals for the administration of justice in local affairs.

The Marquess of *Normanby* certainly

was not yet in possession of such reports. He (Lord Normanby) understood, that there were reports of the kind in existence, but the Government was not yet in possession of them. Whenever they were transmitted to him he should be ready to produce them.

The Earl of *Durham* said, that with regard to any additional reports that might be transmitted to the Government, he could only observe, that some of them had not yet arrived in this country. He had certainly issued commissions of inquiry upon the subjects to which the noble Lord had referred, and since his return he had been put in possession of the report of the commissioners upon Municipal Corporations, which he should place in the hands of the Government in the course of three or four days. He had also received a report from the Bishop of Montreal, relative to the condition of the Church in that province. That also would be presented to the Government in the course of a few days. The report upon general education had not yet arrived, but he expected it shortly, and the moment it arrived it should be given to the Government. With respect to the legislative measures which he had intended to propose, he had in his possession the draft of a bill prepared with great care upon the important subject of a general registry. Had he remained at the head of the Government he should have submitted that measure to the general Council; of course, in consequence of his retirement, he had not been able to do so, but the bill which was in a complete state, was in his possession. With regard to another important measure which he had intended bringing forward had he remained in Canada, he meant the commutation of feudal tenures in the island of Montreal, he could state, that it had been met in a most amicable spirit by the superior of the convent, who possessed a considerable part of those tenures; and he had reason to believe, that that matter would shortly be adjusted. With regard to the jury laws they had also been in process of revision. All the materials and reports in his possession should be at the service of her Majesty's Government. In the event of his receiving information from Canada, he should think it his duty to lay it before her Majesty's Ministers. He should certainly think, that the reports alluded to, would be received in the course of a very short time.

INSULT TO THE BRITISH FLAG.] Lord *Lyndhurst* was anxious to call the attention of the noble Earl at the head of the Admiralty to a circumstance which had already been several times mentioned, but upon which it was nevertheless of great importance to have some more precise information. He hoped their Lordships would not consider him too persevering in again calling the attention of the noble Earl (Minto) to the insult offered to the British flag in the Gulf of Mexico. He was induced to return to the subject at the present moment, because it appeared, that the commander of the French corvette, the Creole, had been for several days in Paris—affording, of course, sufficient opportunities to the English Government of obtaining the proper explanations upon this important subject. He was further induced to call the attention of the noble Earl to the subject, in consequence of certain extraordinary statements and observations made with respect to it in the newspapers of France; and further, because, in consequence of the arrival of Lieutenant Croke in this country, the noble Earl must have had ample opportunities afforded to him of obtaining all necessary information upon the subject. It was of the utmost importance to the honour of this country, that every particular relating to the transaction should be clearly and distinctly known. He assured the noble Earl, that whatever feeling he might entertain upon the subject, the transaction had created a great sensation in the minds of the officers of the navy, and made a deep impression upon the mind of the country. And no wonder; because he thought he might venture to state, that it was the first instance of an insult of this description committed upon a vessel forming part of the navy of Great Britain. Merchant vessels had been sometimes seized, but their liberation being peremptorily demanded had been promptly granted. This, however, was a transaction of a widely different character. The vessel in question was an armed ship—a ship of war forming part of the navy of Great Britain. She was commanded by an officer bearing her Majesty's commission, and wearing the naval uniform. He had the British ensign and pennant at her mast head; she was brought to by a shot from a French sloop of war; she was boarded; the pilot was taken out of her, in spite of the remonstrances and earnest expostulations of the officer who commanded her. Those were the facts as they appeared upon the information just received from the report. The British vessel having many passengers on board, and being in a sea difficult of navigation, was placed in danger by this atrocious act. The pilot was taken forcibly on board the French fleet, and compelled to pilot the fleet against his own countrymen. He had come on board the English vessel under the protection of the British flag, confidently looking upon it, from our past history, as a sufficient protection. It turned out, however, that in this instance it afforded no protection. A more grave, a more serious insult and outrage never was committed towards this country. What was the explanation? It was intimated by the noble Earl (Earl Minto), on a former night, that the whole transaction was to be ascribed to the inexperience of the young officer who commanded the Creole. The French newspapers ascribed it to the impetuosity and daring of that young officer. He (Lord Lyndhurst) trusted, that we had not yet sunk so low, in spite of the system under which we had some time lived, as to suffer the hitherto unsullied purity of the English flag to be stained by any impetuosity or daring of this character. But he had every reason to believe, from all the information he had received upon this subject, that this was not a true statement of the case—that it was not the unauthorised act of the individual to whom he had referred; but that it was the act of the admiral of the French fleet, and he would tell their Lordships why. When the English vessel passed the French corvette, friendly salutes passed between them, and not the slightest intention was manifested of interrupting her course. But immediately afterwards signals were seen flying on board the French admiral, and then it was, the first shot was fired, and the subsequent outrage committed. He (Lord Lyndhurst) was satisfied, that these facts were true—that the insult was offered not by an unauthorised act on the part of the young commander of the corvette, but under the direction of the French admiral himself. But even if the fact were not so, the French admiral was in sight—the act was committed in his presence—he must have heard the shot fired—must have seen the whole transaction. What course did he pursue? He availed himself of the services of the pilot—he did not restore him to the commander of the Express; therefore he adopted the act of his subordinate and was responsible for it. It was said, that there had been an apology. He must call their Lordships' attention to the statement made with respect to that circumstance. The captain of the British vessel remained on the station for some time after the transaction—was any apology made to him? He wished to ask whether any apology was made to the captain who was the victim of this insult and outrage? Was the pilot restored to him? Nothing of the kind. It was not till after the interval of more than a month—it was not till the 31st of December—the transaction having taken place in November—that the French admiral, upon the arrival of Commodore Douglas at the head of a squadron, thought it for the first time necessary to offer some apology for this insult and outrage. But the French admiral had committed the insult—had derived all the advantage he could obtain from it—had made use of the pilot—had not thought fit to restore him; and were we—was England, under such circumstances, to be satisfied with a few words of apology from Admiral Baudin to Commodore Douglas? The noble Earl (the Earl of Minto) said, he did not know whether the apology was given in words or in writing. No doubt it was given in words—no doubt it was a mere verbal apology; for had it been given in writing, Commodore Douglas would, unquestionably, have felt it to be his duty to transmit it at once to the Government at home. But in whatever form it was given, was an apology from the French admiral to Commodore Douglas sufficient to satisfy the English Government for so grave an insult? The French government was responsible for the acts of its officers. The noble Earl said, that Lord Palmerston had made representations to the French Government upon the subject. He entertained too high an opinion of the distinguished peer at the head of the foreign department in France—too high an opinion of his love of justice—too high an opinion of his *loyeauté* (if he might use a French expression) to entertain a doubt, if proper representations were made, that proper and satisfactory explanations would be made by the French Government. But to what was the whole of this unfortunate affair to be ascribed? Entirely to the want of attention paid to the counsel of the noble Duke (the Duke of Wellington) last Session. As far back as the last Session the noble Duke complained, that there was not even a cock-boat in the Gulf of Mexico to protect British interests. Nearly six months afterwards, for the first time, a British squadron appeared in those seas. He would undertake to say, that if a squadron of the smallest kind had been there in November, the French admiral would never have dared to commit this insult on the flag of England. He owned, that he felt deeply on this subject; and he should be ashamed to meet an Englishman in the streets of Paris if he had not mentioned it in his place in that House. He requested, therefore, that the noble Earl (Earl Minto) would state to the House whether he would communicate the information he had no doubt derived from Lieutenant Croke of the whole particulars of the transaction—whether he would produce the log-book of the Express—and whether any satisfactory explanation had been received from the French government.

The Earl of *Minto* certainly could not help wishing, that the noble and learned Lord had postponed his motion; and still more, that he had postponed the observations with which he had accompanied it, and the conclusion to which he had come, for a very few days; because he thought it probable, that by that time he should be in possession of information which he had not yet received, and which would enable him to give a more satisfactory answer to the questions of the noble and learned Lord. He stated before, that it was perfectly true, that a pilot had been taken by force, and against the consent of the commander, from one of her Majesty's ships; he stated, that that was upon the face of it, an offence for which it was necessary to require some distinct and satisfactory explanation. He was not in possession of any of the particulars of the case, except the mere fact of the pilot having been so taken. That fact had been reported by the commander of the Express. It was not reported, at first to the Admiralty, but to the consul at Vera Cruz, and probably, from some misapprehension on the part of the lieutenant, not an intentional error, it was not reported to his superior officer in the fleet; consequently no account had been received through him. A very short and very confused account had, however, reached him (Lord Minto) from the commander of the packet, lieutenant Croke; and upon the receipt of the account he had written to Lieutenant Croke, desiring him to furnish a more distinct and more detailed account of all that had occurred, both as regarded the conduct of the French officer and the steps that he himself had taken. That information had not yet been received. It was impossible, however, that it could take long to prepare; and, therefore, in all probability, he should be in possession of it in the course of a few days. [Lord *Lyndhurst:* But where is the log? Is there no log?] He had not seen the log; but he had seen what he supposed the noble Lord alluded to—the journal where the circumstance was mentioned, reference for the particulars of the transaction being made to the letter which he (Lord Minto) had already informed their Lordships was communicated through the British Consul at Vera Cruz to the Government at home. He had, therefore, information enough to enable him to say, that it was true, that the pilot had been taken out of the vessel in the manner described by the noble and learned Lord, but he was not yet in possession of an account of all the circumstances which might have led to the proceeding; neither did he know whether it was such as it was not possible to justify. He had received one letter from Commodore Douglas not describing the circumstance at all. He should have no objection to the production of that letter, of which he would now read an extract:—"I have also had a satisfactory explanation from the rear-admiral on the subject of the pilot taken out of the Express packet, which was entirely a mistake on the part of his royal highness, the Prince de Joinville, and the French admiral has informed his government of the circumstance." Now, whether it were a mistake of his royal highness, the Prince de Joinville, or a mistake of Admiral Baudin himself, or a mistake common to them both, it was impossible for him (Lord Minto), with the information he at present possessed, to say. But this he was sure of, that the British Admiral being there with a superior force would not have been satisfied with any apology which did not convince him, that no intentional insult was offered to the British flag. He (Lord Minto) must observe, that an insult consisted more in the intention than in the act itself. If in the present instance it should appear, that it arose from an error—if any communication should reach the British Government, that it was not an intentional insult, the question would stand in a very different shape from that in which the noble and learned Lord desired to place it. A communication was made upon the subject at the earliest moment, by the noble Lord at the head of the Foreign Department, to the government of France, stating exactly what their Lordships had heard. Count Molé replied that he had no knowledge whatever of the circumstance except through the newspapers; but that he extremely regretted it. Since that time the Prince de Joinville had arrived in Paris, and it was more than probable that by this time Count Molé might be in possession of letters from Admiral Baudin explanatory of the whole transaction. For these reasons he thought it would have been most desirable that nothing more should have been said upon this subject until they had heard from the French government what explanation Admiral Baudin gave of the affair, and were enabled to judge how far that explanation was likely to be satisfactory to England. He should state, that he knew nothing whatever of this subject officially, though in common with their Lordships many versions of the transaction had reached him from various non-official sources. But he had understood, and he believed it to be true—although he was not able to state positively that such was the fact—that the explanation given by the officer on board the corvette (perhaps he ought not to allude to it), but he understood that the explanation was likely to be this—that there were a number of vessels coming out of Vera Cruz at the same time with the Express—that a signal was made by the French admiral to take the pilots out of those vessels—that the Prince de Joinville, being nearest to the British ship, boarded her and took the pilot—that the signals were made, and the orders for boarding given, in entire ignorance that this was a British vessel, and that the French admiral, having ascertained that she was a British vessel, expressed his regret to Commodore Douglas in a manner that convinced that officer that no intentional insult had been committed upon the English flag. After a representation had been made to the French government upon the subject, surely it was only decent to wait until the administration of that country were in possession of all the information that could be obtained in reference to it, before noble Lords proceeded to impute motives either to individuals or to the Government which probably had no foundation in fact. The British Government at this moment were not in possession of any authentic account of what passed between Admiral Baudin and Commodore Douglas. Therefore he did not think that they were as yet in a condition to press the French government upon the subject. He expected to receive further dispatches from Commodore Douglas in the course of a very short time. When he said this, he must observe further that he thought it extremely improbable that Admiral Baudin would have committed or contemplated any deliberate insult upon the British flag. He was led to this conclusion from the whole of Admiral Baudin's conduct since he had been lying before Vera Cruz. The utmost good feeling had existed and been manifested by both sides between the services of the two countries. This was strongly illustrated in a letter he had received from the captain of the *Edinburgh,* from which, with their Lordships' permission he would read a short extract. The noble Earl then read a passage of the letter, which was to this effect:—That the *Edinburgh,* in going to take up her position was unlucky enough to touch the ground; that she was got off without much difficulty, but still remained in a situation of some little danger, from which she was relieved by a French steamer who took her in tow, and thereby enabled her to reach her berth. It stated further, that nothing could exceed the attention of the French admiral, who had stationed boats with buoys, and taken other precautions to direct the British ships to safe anchorages. No man would go further than he would in exacting a full and proper apology for an offence when he was once satisfied that it was committed; but he would not go out of his way to pick a quarrel with the French. He did not approve of the impatience which prevented us from ascertaining both what actually occurred from our own officer, and what course it was likely that the French government would take on the subject. He was sure that nothing could be more inconsistent with the feeling of the greater portion of their Lordships than to pursue this question in a tone of anger and provocation. He thought it much better to trust to her Majesty's Government for the vindication of the honour of the country; and if they failed in doing so, it would then be time enough to call for full explanation, and for all the correspondence which had taken place on the subject. He wished to set a noble Lord opposite right on one point, and to state that there had been throughout the whole summer cruisers, in the Gulf of Mexico for the protection of British interests and trade, without any view of interfering with the steps the French government were justified in taking.

Lord *Brougham* quite agreed with the noble Earl who had just sat down, that nothing could be more dreadful than that he should hastily be induced to pick a quarrel with the Government, or do anything to interrupt the pacific relations of this country and France. He believed, that his noble and learned Friend opposite, from his good feeling to the Government of France, would be the last man in either House of Parliament to wish for such a thing, and would be the first to lament that any proceeding of his should occasion it. He (Lord Brougham) was also one of the last men who would wish to cause or to see our pacific relations with the Government of France interrupted. However, the subject had been broached, and it would not tend to avoid that, or to get over the difficulty, to attempt to hush it up, or to pass the affair over without some explanation. He did not think that a very brilliant exposition had been given by the noble Earl who had just sat down, but this he should wish to know, how long it was since Lieutenant Croke had arrived in this country? If he had been here only a few days, and was in a distant part of the country, that might have occasioned some delay. — [Lord *Minto:* He has been here for more than a month.] That was very odd, and was very much calculated to make him think that a sufficient explanation was not likely to be given. He did not think, that peace was likely to be preserved by the doctrine of his noble Friend. When an outrage was committed, the offence arising from that was not to depend upon the intention. He understood this was a very small vessel —a mere cutter, or packet, or 10-gun brig. — [Lord *Hardwicke:* Four guns.] Four guns; and therefore there was no dishonour in her yielding to the superior force that was opposed to her. But he must say, that if one man insulted another, and then said it was not his intention to insult, that would be a very unsatisfactory apology, unless indeed it happened to be an act of an equivocal nature—and when everything depended on the intention. He was sorry also to say, that he did not observe anything satisfactory in the statement of the noble Earl, that upon another occasion, and in perfectly different circumstances, when one of our ships was in distress, a French steam-boat assisted her. No doubt, that boat would have helped any ship in such circumstances, even if that ship had insulted it the day before. The mere act of assisting a ship which was in difficulty, did not appear to him to be of great importance. He had no manner of doubt, and he agreed with his noble Friend here, that if a proper representation had been made to the Court of the Tuilleries, from all he knew of Count Molé, and above all from the high character of Louis Philippe, he had no doubt whatever, that as that Royal Prince would be the last to suffer any insult to be offered to his own flag, he would be the last to allow an insult to be offered to another. He was quite sure, that that Royal Prince, from his strict and high sense of honour and justice, would be the first to give ample reparation for any injury that might be sustained.

Viscount *Melville* could not help regretting, for the honour of the British flag, that this humiliating transaction had been allowed to remain in the state in which it had, for so long a period, but he rejoiced to think, from the noble Earl's statement, that in the course of a few days now, we might expect some satisfaction. Concurring with the two noble and learned Lords who had already spoken, as to the certainty that the French government would not be disposed to uphold any improper interference on the part of an officer of theirs, but, on the contrary, would be ready to make every reasonable apology, he still thought, that in order to obtain that, it would have been better if we had proceeded earlier. The packet had arrived in this country about a month ago. The lieutenant must have kept a journal, and in the course of forty eight-hours that journal must have been received at the Admiralty. The moment it was seen that such a transaction had taken place, if it had been obscurely detailed in that journal, it was the duty of the Admiralty, without delay, to have called upon the commander of the vessel for a fuller account, and which account would have been given. So far from that having been the case, he understood that that explanation from the lieutenant was not required until within the last few days.

The Earl of *Minto* said, that on referring to the journal, as he had said, it was very concise; but he had stated, also, that the journal referred to a letter dated from Vera Cruz, which letter was, about the same day, transmitted to the Admiralty, and which was the foundation of the application to her Majesty's Government desiring that some steps should be taken on the subject. But what he was anxious to have understood was, that he had been in possession, from the first moment, of the fact that a pilot was taken out of the packet, and of the manner in which he was taken, but that he had learnt at the same time from Commodore Douglas that an apology had been made by the Admiral. He had desired Lieutenant Croke to give a more full and detailed account of his own conduct.

Viscount *Melville* said, that all the information that could be obtained from Lieutenant Croke, might and ought to have been obtained from him within a day or two after his arrival in this country. But they were told an application to the French government had been made, because Admiral Baudin was supposed to have made some apology to Commodore Douglas, who arrived on the station some weeks after the packet had left it. The packet was an independent vessel, pursuing its own course, under the orders of the Admiralty; and it was the duty of the Foreign Office to have made an immediate representation to the Government of the transaction, independent of any apology or supposed apology, on the part of the Admiral. It was impossible that a foreign man-of-war should make an attack on a British man-of-war, and take from on board of her one of her crew, or her pilot. At least they had no right to do so, and such an affair was unparalleled. As to this being a small vessel, he wanted to know what right the French man-of-war had to take from on board of her a pilot? If she was a merchantman, and they had seized the ship, that would have been intelligible; but that they should attack the ship, take from on board of her a pilot, and allow her to go away, was conduct perfectly unheard of. He could not but think that, if the whole case had been sifted to the bottom, as it should immediately have been, and that, too, totally independent of any communication between the Admiral and the Commodore, with whom we had nothing to do; and if a proper representation, made to the government of France, a proper apology would have been offered, and the British Parliament and the British people would have been saved a great deal of unpleasant feeling, animadversion, and humiliation, which they ought not to have been subjected to. He did hope that, in the course of a few days, such a representation would be received from the French government, as, when it was published, would satisfy the country.

The Duke of *Wellington* said, that as the noble Earl opposite had stated that there were cruisers all the summer in the Gulf of Mexico, he wished to ask, whether there were, in reality, any assistance ready to be afforded by her Majesty's fleet to carry off her Majesty's subjects, or their property, from Vera Cruz, at the period at which the attack was made upon San Juan de Ulloa by the French squadron? or at the subsequent period, when the attack was made by the same squadron on Vera Cruz?

The Earl of *Minto* said, there were letters at the Admiralty from the officer in command before Vera Cruz at the period of the attack, which stated, that he had given what assistance was required in removing British, French, and other subjects from Vera Cruz; in short, all those who wished to be removed, and of whom a great number, in particular of French, were removed. He did not understand there were a great many English who thought it necessary to call for assistance, but all who did, received it; and, at that time, there was a sloop of war before the town, under the command of one of the most distinguished officers in the service.

The Duke of *Wellington* said, that he had not asked the question which had been answered by the noble Earl. The question he asked was, whether previous to or during the attack by the French squadron upon San Juan de Ulloa, or subsequently, and whether previous, or during, or subsequent to the attack by the same squadron upon Vera Cruz, her Majesty's fleet gave any assistance to her Majesty's subjects residing in Vera Cruz, to enable them to save themselves and their property from the attack?

The Earl of *Minto* certainly meant, by what he said, to convey to the noble Duke the information, that there was a very distinguished officer in command there, he meant Captain Robb, of the Satellite, both during the attack, subsequent to the attack, and previous to the attack upon the castle.

The Marquess of *Lansdowne* could add nothing to the most satisfactory answer which fortunately his noble Friend was able to give to the noble Duke's question—namely, that the assistance to which the noble Duke referred was rendered at the time when it was wanted, and in the manner which was thought most satisfactory to such English parties as were concerned. Therefore no detriment could be alleged to have taken place from any omission of the Admiralty, or of her Majesty's Government. He repeated, that he could add nothing to that answer which the noble Duke must feel was most distinctly made. But he could not allow this conversation to pass, after the speech of the noble Viscount who immediately preceded the noble Duke, and who had presided for a considerable time over the Admiralty, without adverting to the general topic of that conversation, if it was to be so called. He entirely agreed with the noble and learned Lord (Lord Brougham) when he said, that we should not be satisfied with a mere belief as to good intentions (however we might entertain that belief), where an insult was offered to the British flag, without obtaining satisfaction and explanation in that particular case; but the difficulty here was, that at the moment at which the noble and learned Lord had chosen to bring forward this question, it was not possible to give an explanation, because the particular apology which had been afforded was not yet fully described to the Government, and the French Government had not yet been apprised (as they must be to enable them to give an answer) of the particulars by their own officers and authorities. The noble Viscount had fairly admitted, that no time was lost in obtaining communications from the Foreign-office on this subject. And what was the result of those communications? That a representation of the circumstances of this case had been made by Lord Granville to Count Molé, the distinguished person to whom the noble and learned Lord (Lord Lyndhurst) had referred in terms of eulogy, which that distinguished person well deserved; and he must add (from long and early acquaintance) that he knew no person on whose personal honour in any transaction more perfect reliance might be placed. Having that feeling in common with the noble and learned Lord as to the personal character of Count Molé, what did they learn to be his answer to Lord Granville? Why, that if any insult had been offered, there would be every disposition to explain and repair it; but that up to that moment they had received no information on the subject from Admiral Baudin. This occurred only a few days ago. He would ask the noble and learned Lord, then, entertaining the opinion of that individual which he professed, whether it would become Lord Granville to meet his distinct declaration with an expression of disbelief, or, whether, it having been so made, he could possibly call on the French government to tender immediate reparation for, and to give explanation of, a transaction of which they had no knowledge whatever, or of the circumstances under which it occurred. All that Lord Granville could do he had done. He had expressed a desire for explanation; and he confirmed the belief expressed by the noble and learned Lord, which was founded on all the transactions of the French government, on the character of the Monarch, on the character of his minister, and on those relations between nation and nation which have now subsisted for several years—that no little unfortunate incident, however pertinaciously magnified, and dwelt upon for a few days in this or the other House of Parliament, would have the disastrous effect of disturbing that which, in common with their Lordships, he was most anxious should remain intact—that perfect understanding between the two governments which though it could not prevent mistakes and occasional differences, ensured that when they did arise an explanation of them would be freely and frankly given on the one side, and cordially and generously received on the other. All that the government knew up to that moment was, that Commodore Douglas received an explanation which he deemed satisfactory, and they had no right to presume, *à priori*, as the noble and learned Lord (Lyndhurst) seemed to do, that it was unsatisfactory. They were undoubtedly, in a situation which called for further inquiry, and all he asked was, that the French government should be allowed time to communicate with its officers.

Lord *Colchester* said, if it were true that an English man-of-war was on the station, the captain of the packet ought at once to have communicated to his superior commander the particulars of the insult which he had received.

The Earl of *Minto:* That, no doubt, was the course which would have been adopted, if these packets were not placed under the diplomatic authorities on shore.

Lord *Lyndhurst* trusted, that as the commanding officer of the French corvette was now in Paris, that Government would not lose as much time in gaining accurate information on the subject as ours had.

Subject dropped.

The House then adjourned.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Friday, March 8, 1839.

MINUTES.] Bills. Read a first time:—Tithe Composition Arrears (Ireland); Ecclesiastical Appointments Suspension.

Petitions presented. By Mr. MAXWELL, from Liverpool, against Municipal Corporations Reform to Ireland.—By Mr. COLQUHOUN, from the Sugar Refiners of Glasgow, for the Equalization of the Sugar Duties.—By Mr. B. SMITH, and Sir THOMAS ACLAND, from several places, for the Repeal of the Corn-laws.—By Messrs. PRINGLE, R. PALMER, CAYLEY, MAUNSELL, MILES, and A. SMITH, Sir THOMAS ACLAND, Lord GEORGE SOMERSET, the Marquess of GRANBY, Colonel GRANT, Lord HENNIKER, and General SHARPE, from a great number of places, against the Repeal of the Corn-laws.—By Mr. COLQUHOUN, Mr. PRINGLE, and Lord J. STUART, for Church Extension in Scotland.—By Lord ELIOT, from Cornwall, against the Beer Act.—By Mr. MILES, from Shepton Mallet, against the Report of the Ecclesiastical Commissioners.—By Mr. MAUNSELL, from Northamptonshire, against any system of National Education not founded on the Scriptures.—By the Marquess of GRANBY, from Stamford, for Amending the Beer Act.—By Lord DUNGANNON, from Llangollen, and Wrexhill, against the Report of the Ecclesiastical Commissioners.—By Mr. LITTON, from Dublin, against the Irish Municipal Corporations Bill.—By Sergeant JACKSON, and Mr. SHAW, from several places, to the same effect.

THE SLAVE TRADE.] Sir *R. Inglis* wished to ask a question of the noble Lord the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs. It would be in the recollection of the House that last Session they had unanimously adopted an Address to her Majesty, with three different objects; the first was to obtain the concurrence of Portugal in such measures as might be necessary for the abolition of the Slave Trade. He would ask, therefore, whether the treaty with Portugal had been ratified, and if not, whether the noble Lord was prepared to act on the declaration which he had made on a former occasion in the event of its not being ratified.

Viscount *Palmerston* was sorry to inform the House, in reply to the question of the hon. Baronet, that the negotiations in which this country had been engaged with Portugal, for nearly four years, for the sake of obtaining a treaty on the subject of the Slave Trade, had not been satisfactory; and that within the last week he had received a dispatch from the British Minister at Lisbon, stating that there was no chance of obtaining the consent of the Portuguese Government to that treaty. It was his intention, on the part of Her Majesty's Government, to lay before the House the papers showing what had passed between the two Governments; and it was then the intention of Ministers to propose to Parliament a legislative measure, for the purpose of giving to our cruisers and commissioners the same power and authority with regard to slave-trading ships, south of the line, which they now exercised with regard to Portuguese slave-trading ships, north of the line.

Subject dropped.

BREACH OF PRIVILEGE—SCOTCH JUDGES.] Mr. *Bannerman* expressed his regret that one moment of the time of the House should be occupied with anything in which he was personally concerned; but he trusted the House would feel that he was justified in the statement which he was about to make. On a late occasion a discussion arose in that House on a motion brought forward by the hon. Member for Greenock, relative to the administration of justice in Scotland. Some remarks which then fell from the hon. Member for St. Andrew's (Mr. E. Ellice, jun.) were animadverted upon, and knowing as he did that there was no individual in the House who would less willingly say anything that could be painful to the feelings of another than his hon. Friend, he rose and said so, and expressed his regret that his hon. Friend should have made use of any expression relative to a Scotch judge which could be considered objectionable. In doing so he himself alluded to the physical infirmity of one of the judges, though not the same judge as his hon. Friend referred to. He stated that about ten days before he left Edinburgh he had been in the Court of Session, and had seen with regret a venerable judge of high character and of most upright mind, but very advanced in age, sitting on the bench. He mentioned the name of Lord Glenlee, and said that he was completely deaf, so much so that a brother judge was prompting him on the right, and another on the left, while a person was supporting him at his back; and he then stated that he was of opinion, judges at the time of life of Lord Glenlee ought to retire on full salaries, and he added that if no one else did so, he should take up the subject. The House had since passed an unanimous resolution stating it as their opinion that judges at a certain time of life ought to retire on a full salary, in consequence of which a Bill had been brought in by his learned Friend the Lord Advocate, and had been read a second time. This was the sum and substance of what fell from him (Mr. Bannerman) on that occasion; he, therefore, did not imagine that words falling from him would have been animadverted upon either in that House or elsewhere. "But on Tuesday last," said the hon. Member "a friend met me in the street, and asked me how I liked the castigation that had been administered on me in the House of Peers, in consequence of what I said of Lord Glenlee, and he then furnished me with a copy of the *Times* newspaper containing the castigation spoken of by my friend, and which, with the permission of the House I will now proceed to read:—" Appeals, House of Lords, Monday, March 4 (before the Lord Chancellor, Lord Brougham and other Peers). After giving judgment Lord Brougham said—' My Lords, I consider it to be my duty, in the performance of strict justice, to make a few observations at the present moment in reference to what has occurred in another place respecting one of the learned judges from whose decision the present appeals have been brought before your Lordships. I allude, my Lords, to Lord Glenlee.' The noble and learned Lord then proceeded to make some general observations, in which I see nothing particularly to find fault with, but he concludes thus, which is that part of the report of which I complain:—' If my Lord Eldon had been alive, I have no doubt he would have considered it his duty to adopt the same course which I have done, because it is the special and the precious privilege of your Lordships to defend, to sustain, and to protect the learned judges when you know that they have been foully, falsely, and unjustifiably assailed.'" In consequence of seeing that report I wrote a note to Lord Brougham, which, with the permission of the House, I will also read.

"5th March, 1839.

"Dear Lord Brougham—Some weeks ago having stated in the House of Commons, that I had seen with regret—

"' Lord Glenlee, a judge very far advanced in years, than whom there was not a better man or more upright judge presiding in one of the divisions in the Court of Session, totally deaf, so much so, that he was prompted by a judge on his right and left, and a person standing behind him, and that I thought judges at such an advanced age should be allowed to retire on full salaries, to which I should call the attention of the House, if no other Member did.'

"My attention was called to the morning papers of to-day, in which there is the report of a Scotch appeal case decided in the House of Lords yesterday, where your Lordship is reported to have said, in alluding to observations which had been made in another place, regarding Lord Glenlee, 'it is the special and precious privilege of your Lordships to advocate, to sustain, and to protect the learned judges when they are foully, falsely, and unjustifiably assailed'—if these expressions be correctly reported, will your Lordship be so good as inform me whether you meant to apply the terms foul, false, and unjustifiable, to any observations which fell from me in the House of Commons, and I remain, faithfully, &c.

"A. Bannerman.

"Lord Brougham, &c."

The noble and learned Lord, on the day following, replied in the following terms:—

"Grafton-street, March 6, 1839.

"Dear Mr. B—I beg leave to assure you, without any kind of personal disrespect, that neither you nor any man living shall ever be suffered to question me upon anything which I may have said, or been represented to say, in the discharge of my duty as a judge of the highest court of appeal in this country; and I am sure that a little reflection must convince you that I am now giving the only answer which it is possible for me to give to the letter you have without due consideration thought proper to write.—I am, dear Mr. B., yours, faithfully,

"H. Brougham."

To this letter I sent the following answer:—

"House of Commons,
"Wednesday Afternoon,

"Dear Lord Brougham.—Your note of this date was sent to me here. You will not I see suffer me, or any man living, to question you upon anything which you may say, or be represented to say, in the discharge of your duty as a judge. Will you, therefore, suffer me to question you as a gentleman, and to ask, whether you believe that a certain noble and learned Lord meant to apply the terms, foul, false, and unjustifiable, to any observations which fell from me in the House of Commons regarding Lord Glenlee. It is my intention to repeat those observations on Friday evening, and I was most anxious to confine my remarks to the venerable judge. If I do not hear from your Lordship before Friday, I will do, what I am sure you would do under similar circumstances, allude to the speech said to have been spoken the other day in the highest Court of Appeal in this country. Faithfully yours, &c.

"A. Bannerman."

Lord Brougham's response to this was as follows:—

"Grafton-street, Thursday.

"Dear Mr. B.—Your second letter is, as

you must be aware, only another form of the first, and can only be answered in the same manner.

"Whatever you may do, in the way you mention, is for your own consideration; and I hope you will reckon it no disrespect or unkindness towards you if I say, that any reflections on my judicial conduct, by whomsoever made, or in whatsoever place, are to me a matter of perfect indifference. Nay, I had far rather any attacks were made on myself, who am able to defend myself, than on those who are necessarily without the means of defence. I am, however, far from suspecting you of any such thing. Believe me, dear Mr. B., faithfully yours, "H. BROUGHAM."

The House will see, that that noble and learned Lord will not suffer me to question him as a judge; but the noble and learned Lord must then suffer me to say, that, having seen that report not only in the *Times*, but in the *Morning Herald*, and the *Morning Advertiser* nearly in the same words, I think that there is no human being will believe but that that speech was spoken. The noble and learned Lord, in the speech, alludes to Lord Eldon, and says, that if Lord Eldon had now been living, he would have thought it proper to have adopted the same course. Perhaps he might, because with all the prudence and caution, and with all the talent of that eminent judge, nevertheless, he did, on one occasion, accuse an hon. Gentleman of this House of uttering a falsehood. Now, that hon. individual, Sir, was yourself. You did not submit, Sir, patiently to that accusation, nor is it right that I should be accused of making a false and calumnious attack upon a learned judge. The course pursued by you, Sir, I shall, if I am supported, follow upon the present occasion. I will, Sir, use your own expressions, and repeat the substance of what you stated when you brought the question before this House on the 1st of March, 1824, when, after stating what had fallen from Lord Eldon, you, Sir, used these expressions, and I now ask you to allow me to use what you then said, altering only the names. And "Now, Sir, let me ask what authority, what right has Lord" Brougham, "or any other judge, to undertake to comment from the judgment-seat on the debates of this House? Where does Lord" Brougham, "who is so cautious, find a precedent for this? How can he say, that he is not guilty of a gross breach of the privileges of this House? It is not a formal but a substantial breach of privilege, a direct attack on the security and freedom of debate, which is the only legitimate object of privilege." I assure the House, that I bring the question before the House solely on public grounds, and I should well like that an end should be put to the language which too frequently passes between Members of this and of the other House, and between Members of the other House and this. For by-and-by, unless we put a stop to the practice, it will, I fear, be said, 'A plague on both your houses.'" I will, Sir, quote only one other authority. In the debate to which I have referred, no man more severely censured Lord Eldon than Henry Brougham did:--

"The only defence that has been set up is, that there was something in the proceeding on his part as hasty in itself, as it was extraordinary on the part of that learned judge, that his conduct besides being indecorous to the House, showed rashness and impatience, very unsuitable to the judgment seat, and that, therefore, it is to be excused. I greatly fear, that no one out of this House will see the strength of this plea, and that if we refuse to deal with this offence, and reserve our privileges to crush those humbler individuals from whose attacks we have no danger to apprehend, even for this ignoble purpose they will be found ineffectual. If persons connected with the press or any person in inferior station to Lord" Brougham, "should feel any right to hold us up to public scorn, or to point to our proceedings in characters however false (for it is admitted that the representation this night in question is altogether false), I cannot conceive why he should allow such a wish to remain to the uttermost degree ungratified. But if that wish should be indulged in, it will be ridiculous, or worse than ridiculous, to arm ourselves with the terrors of privilege, to guard against ridicule or invective, while we take no means to secure ourselves against a repetition of this gross and dangerous attack on the freedom of our debates, and the independence of so many of our Members."

I concur, Sir, in every word that fell from Henry Brougham upon that occasion. I cannot doubt, that the expressions in the report to which I have referred are intended to apply to me, because no individual in this House commented on the conduct of Lord Glenlee except myself. I am sorry to detain the House so long, but I will conclude by following the course which you, Sir, adopted in 1824; and I now, Sir, move, that "the printer of the *Times* do attend at the bar of this House on Monday next;" and I do so solely for the purpose, as you stated at that time, of justifying the expressions used by me in this House.

Mr. *Edward Ellice*, jun., assured the House, that on this subject of great importance, which his hon. Friend, the Member for Aberdeen had brought under the notice of the House, he was extremely happy to find, that a Member of more experience and of greater weight in the House, had relieved him (Mr. Ellice) from a duty which he would not have shrunk from in regard to the privileges or in vindication of his own character. His hon. Friend had fully stated hia case: but the report, which had been referred to, alluded indirectly to him for what he had stated in that House, impugning the Scotch bench. Those hon. Members who were present when the Lord Advocate introduced his bill to raise the salaries of the Scotch judges, would remember, that he took occasion to say, that considering the notorious physical infirmities of some of the learned judges, and the dissatisfaction which existed at the manner of proceeding in the Court of Session, and that the illness of others led to the belief that by a sudden accident the whole course of justice would be stopped, from the impossibility of procuring a quorum of judges, he thought it his duty, seeing also, that it was the subject of general consideration and comment on the part of the public press, to bring it under the attention of the House, and of her Majesty's Ministers. Certainly he had let fall, in the hurry of debate, an expression which was not warranted by circumstances; and he had taken the earliest opportunity of retracting the expression, which he regretted to have used; but if he had used the words "physical infirmity" instead of "mental imbecility," he would have had nothing to regret further than the regret which he always felt at being forced to use such an expression in the discharge of his public duty against judges so uniformly esteemed and respected. Except that expression, however, he did not lament the part he had taken in that discussion, and he was ready to sustain the view he then took, and he would do so when the subject was again under discussion. He assured the House, that it gave him great pain to allude to a subject of public notoriety. The facts, however, had not only been stated by himself, but in the most public way, in the newspapers, which, if they were false, might be proceeded against as libels. Unless these statements were refuted by something more than mere assertions they would remain as facts in the public mind —they would be repeated, and until they were disproved, there would be no confidence in the public mind as to the administration of justice. He merely said this because, though attacks had been made upon freedom of speech for observations made in his place as a Member cf that House, and though he had let fall an expression which he regretted, that he might repeat the statement, that the person who had thought fit to calumniate him might be disarmed of all pretence for the calumny which he had thrown out, and he would only say, that the imputation was as groundless as other misrepresentations and charges against the conduct of other men which had before fallen from the same lips. What course the House would take upon the present motion it was not for him to say. Whether they would step in to uphold their privileges which had been invaded by an attempt at interference with their discussions, or whether the House would pass by the allegations, as it had often heretofore passed by similar attacks was a matter of perfect indifference to him. He could only tell the noble Lord that whatever calumnious abuse he might receive, whatever odium he might incur, he would not be deterred as an independent representative of the people of England, from the course which he deemed to be right, or from making those remarks which appeared to him to be reasonable and proper on any subject before the House. He had thought it right to say thus much in reply to the foul aspersion which the noble Lord had thought it necessary to make upon him. He had never said one word in disparagement of the learning or the integrity of any noble Lord on the bench in Scotland, and he could only say, that if it were a matter of prudence and discretion on the part of the noble judges of the supreme court of Scotland to take no notice of his remarks, he thought it would be of advantage to the country if their example were copied by noble Lords who were placed in authority above them, and who presided in the highest court of judicature in the empire.

Mr. *Williams Wynn* said, that the question could not be put till the paper complained of had been read by the clerk at the Table; which having been done,

Sir *G. Clerk* said, he would leave it to hon. Members who were more familiar with the forms of the House than he was, to discover whether that which was complained of by the hon. Member opposite, could be called a breach of privilege or not. As the hon. Gentlemen, the Members for Aberdeen and St. Andrew's, felt so sensitively the remarks which had been made in the newspapers, or in another place, with respect to their own character, they might very well understand how those who took a deep interest in the private reputation and character of the distinguished men who presided over the courts of judicature in Scotland, should, upon still higher than any mere personal grounds, for the sake of the respect that was due to the administration of justice in the country, be anxious to avail themselves of the first opportunity of giving a more complete and satisfactory answer to the charges which had been made, than could well be afforded on the spur of the instant when the matter was first brought forward in that House. He confessed he had heard, as he stated at the time, with the utmost astonishment, the statement which had been made by the hon. Member for St. Andrew's, with regard to the state of the judges of the Court of Session; and he could only attribute it to the ignorance which the hon. Gentleman——

Colonel *Davies* rose to order. He apprehended the question before the House was not Lord Glenlee's state of health, with respect to which the hon. Baronet would have other opportunities of speaking. The question related to the freedom of debate. It was this—whether the observations reported to have been made in another place, were not a breach of the privileges of that House.

Sir *G. Clerk* said, if he were considered at all out of order in the observations he was about to make, he should be perfectly ready to bow to the decision of the House; but having heard the hon. Members for Aberdeen and St. Andrew's, without interruption reiterating the same charges they had originally made as to the state of the judges of the Court of Session, he did appeal to the House, as a matter of justice, whether he should not be permitted to make a short statement—and he promised it should be very brief—by way of reply. He was proceeding to state, when he was interrupted, that he had heard, with great astonishment, the observations which had been made by the hon. Member for St. Andrew's (Mr. G. Ellice, jun.), and he could only attribute it to the ignorance under which he thought, without meaning any reflection upon him, that hon. Member might fairly be conceived to labour upon such a subject, considering that he had been employed for a considerable period in the other hemisphere, and had only lately returned to discharge his duty to his constituents in that House, or look after their interests in Scotland. He was therefore only able to state what he knew of his own knowledge, from the recent opportunities he had enjoyed of personally communicating with the distinguished individual in question, that the hon. Member was totally misinformed as to the statement he had made. After he had spoken, the hon. Member for Aberdeen addressed the House, in corroboration of what had been stated by the hon. Member for St. Andrew's, adducing as evidence a particular instance, which he said had come under his own eye, and was calculated to produce a considerable impression on his mind. He knew perfectly well that the hon. Member for Aberdeen would not state, either in that House or anywhere else, what he did not believe to be perfectly true; and he concluded that the hon. Member must have laboured under some misapprehension. He (Sir G. Clerk) had therefore felt it to be his duty to write to those persons who were most certain to be accurately acquainted with all the facts of the case, in order that he might be enabled to state satisfactorily the whole circumstances when he should next have an opportunity of addressing the House on the subject. The observations which had been made by those two hon. Gentlemen, the Members for Aberdeen and St. Andrew's, had produced a great impression in Scotland, not upon the learned judges who were the subjects of those observations, they well knew the ability and energy with which they were conscious they discharged their duties, and they could safely treat, with silent and dignified contempt, the remarks which had been made. The same feeling prevailed among the gentlemen of the bar and the friends and relations of the judges in Scotland; but there were persons unconnected with the bar of Scotland, who knew that the effect of those remarks would not be confined to Edinburgh, seeing they were calculated to throw doubt where no doubt should remain as to the manner in which justice was administered in Scotland. Among those to whom he wrote on this subject, he had felt it to be his duty to address the judges who sat in the same court with Lord Glenlee, and inquire whether they had any recollection of any circumstance that could give any colour to what had been stated by the hon. Member for Aberdeen. He trusted the House would permit him to read those letters, however they might meet the view of the hon. Member for St. Andrew's, who said he would still repeat and believe to the full extent what he had stated with respect to the condition of the Scottish judges, until he had some better proof to the contrary than any mere assertion of a Member in his place. He entirely concurred in one observation of the hon. Member, when he said, that these observations, if susceptible of contradiction, were actionable; and so they would and ought to be actionable, if they had been uttered anywhere but in that House. When, therefore, hon. Gentlemen brought forward questions affecting their own privileges as Members of that House, they ought to take care not to abuse their privileges, by bringing forward vague assertions against persons whose character was public property as judges of the land, without taking more pains to make themselves masters of all the facts of the case than had evidently been done in the present instance. Some of the letters he had received were from the most distinguished persons in Scotland; he should not read the whole of them, lest he should give offence to some hon. Gentleman opposite, for many of the expressions were by no means complimentary to them. He would, however, with the permission of the House, read one letter from one of the judges who sat in the same court with Lord Glenlee. The hon. Baronet then read an extract to the following effect:—

"I have been extremely shocked by the observations made on Lord Glenlee during the late debate on the judges of the Court of Session, and I believe there are very few persons acquainted with the character, merits, and capacity of his Lordship in this country who do not experience similar feelings. There is, I believe, no judge on the bench whose opinions obtain higher respect, not only from his colleagues, but from practitioners and litigants, than Lord Glenlee's do; indeed, it would be strange if they did not, for no one case occurs in which he does not exhibit the most perfect acquaintance with the most minute fact, however complex or involved, as well as on points of law, upon which the judgment of the court should be required, and this without the aid of a single note to fix the different circumstances in his recollection. Having sat beside Lord Glenlee for nine years, I may say his judgments have commanded the respect of the whole profession; and I can assure you, I have never seen, during all that time, the slightest reason to assist his recollection, or, as has been alleged, to prompt him as to matters in discussion. I have always felt that he was far better entitled to guide my judgment than I should be to prompt him. I suspect, however, that the hon. Member who said that he saw two judges, one on each side, and a clerk, prompting him, must have been present at a meeting of the Court, when a few matters of mere form were gone through, which the judges were the mere instruments of enacting, matters of course, into which nothing but Lord Glenlee's anxiety would have induced him to enter. This very circumstance necessarily produced embarrassment to the clerks; and hence, very likely, there was an appearance of a want of intelligence in the judge, which ought to have been attributed to the officer. It most assuredly did not arise from any want of capacity. Lord Glenlee is no doubt deaf; but not more so than he has been during the many years he has been looked up to as one of the greatest lawyers and judges that ever sat on the bench. But he is not so deaf now as another judge who was appointed Chief Baron of Scotland, with the approbation of the whole profession."

He (Sir G. Clerk) had letters from another judge who also sat in the same court, who entered more into detail on some of the points in the case, and who suggested that the hon. Member must have gone into court only for a few minutes at an early period of the day, and that if he had remained a little longer, the whole would have been satisfactorily explained. Lord Glenlee, in addition to being one of the most acute lawyers in Scotland, was also one of the most eminent classical scholars in Great Britain. He believed he was also one of the profoundest mathematicians, having been occupied, the House would be surprised to learn, during part of the late recess, in working out a new solution of a very difficult problem in high geometry for one of the first mathematicians in Scotland. He wished the hon. Member had not so soon left the Court of Session on the day of his visit, or he would have heard Lord Glenlee deliver a most able judgment after his two juniors had expressed their opinions, when he not only took up with the greatest clearness the points they had laid down, but admirably illustrated and strengthened their decision. He could not doubt, from the concurrent testimony of all parties in Scotland, that the two hon. Members for Aberdeen and St. Andrew's were the tools of some persons who wished to make use of them for a particular purpose. They seemed to be in the hands of some hungry expectants of office, who were anxious, that as the speeches of the hon. Members might have the effect of inducing that learned judge to retire, and that the Lord-Advocate, or some other eminent lawyer, being elevated to the bench as his successor, they might come in for a share of the business which the learned Lord now monopolized. He was sure, that all who had enjoyed the opportunity of seeing the judges in the Court of Session must be satisfied with the great vigour and energy, and legal acuteness, with which they discharged the important functions of their high situations. He begged pardon for having so long detained the House. If the hon. Member for St. Andrew's was not satisfied with the refutation of the charge which he had made, he had other letters which he could read. He would, however, content himself with repeating his expression of honest indignation at the calumnies, the foul calumnies, though he believed unintentionally, on the part of the hon. Member for Aberdeen, which had been uttered in connexion with this subject. He believed the hon. Member was acting under a great misapprehension of the real facts of the case; for with his known prudence and candour, it could not be believed he would have brought forward a charge of this nature without being satisfied in his own mind, that there was sufficient ground for it. He must, however, deeply regret, that on such slight grounds so grave a charge should have been brought forward. He did not know whether it were the intention of the hon. Member to proceed any further with this motion. He presumed he had brought it forward merely to give him an opportunity of addressing the House; and he (Sir G. Clerk) was afraid he had now trespassed too long on their indulgence. He begged, in conclusion, to appeal to the Lord-Advocate, in corroboration of the statements he had made, and he would leave it to the noble Lord, who, he saw, was about to rise, to say whether the paragraph which had been read was or not a breach of the privileges of the House.

Lord *J. Russell.* The hon. Baronet who has just sat down has not, indeed, addressed himself to the question before the House, and, which was introduced by my hon. Friend, the Member for Aberdeen. The first question is whether it is proper that a charge should be made against any Members of this House for doing their duty in this House? and the second question is, whether we ought to proceed upon this charge as a breach of the privileges of this House? Now, with regard to the first question, which the hon. Gentleman only touched upon incidentally, I must say, that in doing so he only confirmed my previous opinion, that with regard to the conduct of the person who is represented as having given the opinion complained of, he is without any justification whatsoever. It appears that the hon. Member for Aberdeen, on a motion before the House, was quite competent to give, and he had a right to give his opinion. Any Member has a right to state what he thinks may assist this House in forming an opinion either upon the matter before it or that might afterwards arise out of it. The hon. Member stated, that one of the judges was afflicted with the infirmity of deafness; and what has the hon. Baronet said in answer to this? Why he has read a letter from a learned Gentleman who sits in the same court, and who says that certainly the Judge is deaf. Therefore, with respect to the hon. Member for Aberdeen, there is no blame; he believed the case which had come under his own observation, and he was justified in speaking of the learned Lord's deafness. That the learned Judge is a man of great learning, of great merit, that through a long course of years he has been an able judge, and that he is distinguished in literature, and of great classical acquirements, is what the hon. Member for Aberdeen has not denied, and what no one has thought of denying; but it was said, that the course of justice may be impeded by the natural infirmity of a judge who has passed the age of eighty. If the hon. Member for Aberdeen be wrong in entertaining this feeling, I must be also blameable; for having heard reports of the infirmities of some of the judges, I wrote to the Lord Justice Clerk, who happened to be in town, and asked whether the bench in the court was completely filled, and especially respecting Lord Glenlee. I received an answer and a very satisfactory answer it was. I was assured that the business of the court was well carried on, and from that time I thought it unnecessary to take any further step; but that infirmity should be imputed to a man more than eighty years of age is not extraordinary. Yet are we told by this newspaper that somebody, in delivering a judgement, which had nothing to do with Lord Glenlee, in which no judgment of that learned Lord was called in question, and where the parties were simply A and B, has asserted, that in what has been said by a Member of this House, that learned Judge has been "foully, falsely, and unjustifiably assailed," and that he insinuated, that these foul, false, and calumnious accusations had been made in this House, and by a Member of this House. I look upon this, Sir, as an unjust attack upon the privileges of the Members of this House; and I must say, Sir, whether I agree to the proceeding, which you recommended in the year 1824, or whether I do not, that any Member of this House, upon any question affecting the administration of justice, or on any other question before this House, has a right to state any facts or any circumstances which may assist the House to form its opinion; and I must say, also, that taking advantage of pronouncing a judgment, with the gravity which such an act ought to produce, to impugn the statements made in this House, to libel and to calumniate the Members of this House, is making an unjustifiable use of the privileges which belong to a judge. That, Sir, was also your opinion in the year 1824. In that case a learned and able judge thought that he had been unfairly attacked, and carried away by the warmth which naturally belonged to a man who, whatever were his defects in regard to delay and hesitation, was a learned and conscientious judge—carried away, Sir, by the warmth arising from those circumstances he imputed to you a falsehood, and I think you were right in making the statement which you did. But whether we ought to adopt the second proposition of my hon. Friend, whether it would be right to call to the Bar of this House the printer of the newspaper, and whether we ought to proceed further in this case, I cannot so readily give a positive answer. I dare say, Sir, that even in 1824 I entertained doubts on the policy of such a proceeding. I do not recollect, that I voted upon that occasion, or that I was convinced by the able speech of Henry Brougham. I think, Sir, that having the short-hand writer to the Bar of this House to produce his notes, to prove which he doubtless can, that he took down the words, that they are accurately given, and that he had no intention to exaggerate or to extort the meaning; in short, to proceed further in this matter would tend neither to uphold the dignity of the judges, to ascertain the truth, nor to raise the character of this House of Commons. For my own part, I always think, as I stated last year, when the hon. and learned Gentleman, the Member for Dublin, was accused in this House of having said somewhere, at some tavern or other, I believe, "that Members of this House were guilty of foul perjury, that, with regard to these accusations of false conduct in the Members of this House, while those Members look to the propriety of their own conduct, and look to their duties to their constituents, it will not in the least tend to raise them in the opinion of the country, that they should assert their privilege by any vindictive proceeding;" and therefore, while I do not wonder at the matter which induced the hon. Member for Aberdeen to bring forward this question, seeing himself attacked in this manner for what was the simple performance of his duty as a Member of this House, I hope that he will not persist in his motion. At the same time, however, I hope that he will not be deterred from what he may conceive to be his duty, and that no aspersions of this kind will prevent him from saying what is his opinion on the various subjects coming before the House; but that undeterred by anything of this description, he will repeat any statement he may have to make respecting the Scotch judges or any other subject, on the merits of which he may be assured and whatever may be the consequence, no one will doubt, that he is only supporting his duties in this House, and that he is animated by feelings as pure and as conscientious as any which can animate any hon. Member.

Sir *Robert Peel*: I must say, that I hope the hon. Gentleman will not adopt the advice which has been offered him by the noble Lord, but that he will well consider the consequences of the exercise of the great privilege and right which, as a Member of this House, he undoubtedly possesses, before he questions the competency of those learned judges who are far distant from the place in which he brings forward his accusations. What is the case of the judge in question. The hon. Gentleman admits, that the learned judge, whose conduct he calls in question, is a man of the highest integrity, that no reflection has ever been cast upon him, and that his impartiality and his learning are undoubted. Doubts are entertained as to the physical powers of the judge. The noble Lord heard of this, and he instituted an inquiry which was perfectly satisfactory. I have, therefore, these facts before me. I am dealing with the case of a judge of the highest eminence, of the greatest experience, of admitted integrity, of the highest character for impartiality, and who is proved to be physically competent to perform the duties of his office, after inquiry has been made. What! can the hon. Gentleman be surprised that the friends of Lord Glenlee, after this should be displeased at having his powers questioned in a public assembly? We constitute the judges independent of the Crown, and we have reserved to ourselves the power of removing them upon an address; but if we do not think fit to exercise that power, we ought most scrupulously to abstain from diminishing the importance of their position, and from paralysing their functions by calling in question the manner in which they perform their functions. What must be the effect of any proceeding which tends to diminish their consequence in the administration of justice—what uncertainty must not be introduced by an allegation of their physical disability? Another gentleman may go into court and may fancy, that he sees other judges even less competent than Lord Glenlee, and how difficult it must be to determine the fact—how improper to make it the subject of discussion. You do not call in question any specific matter, but you make allegations against which it is impossible to produce proof, and you leave him, not removed by any actual interference of ours, but with his mental and physical powers called into question, and you are throwing every difficulty in his way to prevent his retirement from the situation which he holds. Now, the question is, shall we call this printer to the bar of the House—will you, who refused to notice the attack made upon a noble Friend of mine—will you, who said, that when parties found themselves accused great latitude must be allowed, and that it must be permitted that the acts of Members of this House should be questioned, and that it is preposterous to visit those who remark upon them with punishment—will you, who in the beginning of this debate, in referring to matters in the other House of Parliament, thought that you evaded the breach of privilege by referring to it thus vaguely—will you, I ask, declare yourselves prepared to give up your privilege of calling this person to the bar? I deprecated the adoption of the course in the case of Lord Eldon, and Mr. Canning in that case also resisted the motion, and he thus concluded his speech to the House:—"With these feelings, and to prevent the commencement of a proceeding, the termination of which we cannot anticipate, and with the fullest admission, that the hon. and learned Gentleman has set himself entirely right with the House and the country, I shall oppose his motion." And if this motion be persevered in, to call this printer to the bar, I shall, for the purpose of preventing the House from encountering the difficulty which I see will arise, and on the same ground, as that stated by the right hon. Gentleman whose speech I have quoted, give my most strenuous resistance to the motion. Whether these words were used or not, I cannot undertake to say. I trust they were not as applied to the hon. Gentleman; but I must say, that if you exercise your extreme right to call into question the competency of the judges, you must not be too scrupulous in inquiring into the extreme right of others to defend them. Of the particular expressions that are in the newspapers, the accuracy of the report of those attributed to Lord Eldon was denied by him, and it is possible, that the newspaper report may have given them incorrectly in this instance also; but this I must say, I would claim for the judges sitting in the House of Peers the perfect right, on receiving appeals from the judgment of Lord Glenlee to say, "I affirm this judgment of Lord Glenlee; I have seen it questioned whether he is in the full possession of his faculties—whether his powers of hearing are so perfect as to render him fit to exercise his judicial functions; but from my own knowledge of him—from my confidence in his talents and his learning—and from an intimate acquaintance with those who know him, I say that these representations must be unfounded, and I have the greatest confidence in his abilities and competence." I say that it may be the duty of the judges to give vent to such feelings—it may be their duty to discountenance those expensive appeals which may be made in consequence of the exercise by you of your right, for you may have induced those suitors by your representations of the incompetency of the judges in Scotland to entertain a hope, that the decisions given by them may be reversed; and, if it be so—if you have the right to call into question their competency—you are not the men who are to complain of another who says, "I know, that Lord Glenlee is worthy of public confidence, and I feel it to be my duty to discountenance those suitors who have appealed from his decisions to to the House of Lords on the ground of his inability." The hon. Gentleman who spoke from the third bench (Mr. E. Ellice) did not attempt to deal unfairly with the House, and he very candidly confessed his regret at some of the terms he had used—he stated, that he was exceedingly sorry for what he had said. Why, then, extend your indulgence to this case? Permit those who are the friends of these eminent men to vindicate them from charges which are unfounded, and having this power, and the right to exercise it, let us consider what risk we incur of prejudicing the administration of justice by preferring charges which admit of very positive refutation, but which tend to impair the efficacy of the judgments of those who preside in the courts of law.

Mr. *W. Duncombe* thought, that if the course proposed by the hon. Member were adopted it would be both objectionable and inconvenient, and more especially as the hon. Member had not informed the House how he would follow up the motion in the event of its being affirmed. Every thing he had heard in the debate had confirmed his opinion, but one expression which had been used would convey to the House an idea, that Lord Brougham was ready, and had taken opportunities of expressing his animosity in reference to the late Earl of Eldon. Political animosity might have existed between the noble and learned Lords, but he felt it to be due to Lord Brougham to say, that both in the House of Commons and in the House of Lords, and also on the judicial bench, he had taken opportunities over and over again of bearing his testimony to and of passing his high encomiums upon the judicial talents, unsullied integrity, and spotless character of the noble Earl. He repeated his regret, that the hon. Gentleman had thought proper to delay the public business, when his motion could not lead to any satisfactory conclusion.

The *Lord Advocate* having been particularly alluded to, felt it his duty to say a few words upon the subject under discussion. It would be in the recollection of hon. Members, that he rose immediately after the hon. Gentleman, the Member for Greenock on a former evening, and, that he went through all the cases to which he had alluded, and he trusted, that the account which he gave was a satisfactory one. In doing so he had been compelled to advert to many of the observations made by that hon. Member, and he was able, he thought, successfully to anticipate and to obviate most of the expressions afterwards made use of by the hon. Members for Aberdeen and for St. Andrew's. He regretted exceedingly, that those observations had been made, but he could not deny, that Members of that House had a right to inquire into the manner in which justice was administered, but he agreed, that the exercise of the right was to be guarded by the strictest caution, and if a case arose, on which they might require an exposition, the party making the motion should state much less than he contended for, in order that the House might inquire into the fact. He could not help thinking, that the discussion should now terminate at once, for if words were made use of in another place, in reference to what was said in that House, such a course could only be defended on the ground of the persons who defended the person first attacked having a right to use much stronger language than was commonly employed. He thought, that the character of the judges of the land ought not to be attacked upon slight grounds, and that aged gentlemen who had long devoted their services and abilities to their country, in the performance of their duties in an impartial manner, ought to receive not merely the indulgence but the protection of Parliament.

Mr. *Williams Wynn* was of opinion that there was not the shadow of a pretence for maintaining that there had been any Breach of Privilege on the present occasion. He had always contended for the real privileges of the House, and he should always continue to do so; but he considered that nothing could so effectually tend to the subversion of those privileges as an attempt to push them beyond their ancient and legitimate extent. True it was, that no Member could, without a breach of privilege, be called in question, or personally reviled for anything he had stated in his place in Parliament; but was it to be said that any allegations made in that House against the character and the conduct of an individual were not to be questioned or contradicted, and particularly that no newspaper was to venture to give currency to a contradiction of such allegations when they had been publicly circulated by its own reports? When the allegations had been made, was it not to be allowed that they should be declared to be false and unfounded? If any man, not a Member of that House, had an allegation made against him, might he not say that whenever and by whomsoever it had been made, it was false and unfounded, and was it to be said that the reporter was not to give publication to that contradiction, because it might happen that the slander originated with a Member of the House of Commons? He regretted, and he should always regret, that any Member of one House of Parliament should so use his discretion as to point to an expression used in the other House, and to comment upon it, but when allegations reflecting on an individual had been made, and they had been published from one end of the country to the other, to say that that person or his friends should not be at liberty to give the same publicity to a contradiction, seemed to involve a degree of tyranny which he trusted neither House of Parliament would ever attempt.

Lord *J. Russell:* I am glad to see that the time has come when the right hon. Gentleman speaks against privilege.

Mr. *Williams Wynn:* I have not spoken against privilege, but I have spoken against that which, if it were proved, and could be proved, to be according to the privileges of the House, would be tyranny to the country.

Dr. *Lushington* must enter his most decided protest against the principle of commenting in one House upon the speeches made in another, which he thought was likely to be attended with the most mischievous consequences. With regard to this particular case, the noble and learned Lord might have commented upon the judgment immediately under consideration, without at all referring to the observations made by the hon. Member for Aberdeen, because he could well have said, that the appeal was one in which Lord Glenlee had delivered his opinion—an opinion which he maintained was to be depended upon, because he believed his faculties to be unimpaired, and the powers of discrimination of that learned Lord to be unimpaired. The noble and learned Lord, whose friendship he had enjoyed for the last thirty years, however, so far from pursuing this course, had declaimed against the observations which had been made, contrary to the dignity of the judgment seat, and against the sobriety of his judicial character, and in using those expressions which were attributed to him (if he had used them) he must say, that he had taken a course likely to produce consequences the most mischievous, and, in his opinion, degrading to the judgment seat, in converting the highest tribunal in the country—where justice should be administered purely and distinctly, into an arena for political discussion. He should not enter into the various other cases discussed, but although he had no sort of personal acquaintance with Lord Glenlee, he knew him well through the judgments which he had delivered, and which he had been in the habit of reading, and he might say pondering upon; and he must say, that he never perceived any defect in the mode in which they were framed. What the learned Lord might be as regarded his ordinary powers he was unable to judge; but so far as the written record went, he must say, that no good reason for complaint existed. He agreed with what had been said of the character of the judges, and as to the mode in which the execution of their duties should be questioned in that House; but he begged to say, that when a case did occur which it was necessary to state to the House, however odious the task might be, it was the duty of that hon. Member who was interested in it to bring it forward. He alluded to no one, but it had been his fortune, in the course of his experience, to see instances in which men of great learning and great ability, had from old age and infirmity become incapable of performing their duties, and it was on that ground that he thought, although it was impossible to mark out the precise period at which the judges should retire, that a greater benefit could not be conferred upon the country than that of giving the judges, when they reached the age of fourscore years, whatever might be their vigour, the opportunity of spending the remainder of their lives without the necessity of their being exposed to the agitation and excitement produced by the proceedings in which, by a continuance in their situations, they would be necessarily mixed up. He could not agree that this was an improper intrusion, for any man who had placed his conduct before the public, was bound to come forward and defend it. He had only to express his deep regret, that the noble and learned Lord, if he did use these expressions, had not afterwards said, "I was discharging my duty, to the best of my judgment, and I will at once acknowledge that I did not mean to impute conduct to the hon. Gentleman unbecoming his condition and station." There was nothing to prevent his doing so, and he appealed to both sides of the House, whether these expressions, having fallen in the warmth of argument (although he contended that there should be no warmth allowed to exist on the judgment seat), any hon. Gentleman having used them in reference to an individual not in the House, whether he were high or low, if he had said anything not strictly true, would not say "Question me you cannot, for I have a right to stand on my privilege, but as a man of honour, I am ready to express my sorrow." He begged to say, that he hoped there would be no misapprehension of what he had said this evening. It was a painful matter to him to have been obliged to have delivered his opinions, or to have discussed the conduct of his noble and learned Friend in any form. He had enjoyed his intimacy and friendship during the last thirty years, and he hoped that he had said nothing which would offend him, but that his noble Friend would rather prize his friendship the more for having declared the opinion which he entertained.

Mr. *Bannerman* in reply, said, he did not think he had been very fairly dealt with in the course which the debate had taken, and he begged now to repeat what he had before said, that the learned Lord to whom he had referred was prompted on the bench, for he had witnessed the circumstance himself, and therefore knew it of his own knowledge. He had never intended to say anything in reference to the learned Lord otherwise than speaking of him in the highest terms so far as his personal character went, but his observations had been directed to his physical infirmities. The right hon. Baronet (Sir Robert Peel) would recollect, that in 1826 a subject of a similar character had been discussed, when a petition was presented by the present Lord Abinger, then Sir J. Scarlett, in reference to Lord Norbury, the Chief Justice of the Common Pleas in Ireland. The petitioner alleged "that the noble Lord was eighty-five years of age, and was incapacitated from the adequate performance of his judicial duties by the infirmity and debility consequent upon old age. In particular, the learned Lord was so subject to lethargic stupor, that he would frequently fall asleep in the middle of the trial at which he was presiding." Mr. North subsequently "admitted that that part of the allegations of the petition against the learned Lord was undoubtedly true, in which it was stated that he was eighty-five years of age, and he had ascertained, having taken pains to make the inquiry, that there was no judge so old either in Ireland or this country. He agreed, too, that the learned Lord would have consulted his ease, his dignity, the wishes of his best friends, and the interests of the administration of justice, if he had retired from the bench some time since." As there seemed to be a feeling in the House against the motion, and as he had been enabled to make his statement in that House, he would not further press his motion. The noble and learned Lord however, in one part of the report of which he complained, had said, that he ought to have moved an address to the Crown for an inquiry into the physical infirmity of the judges in the Court of Session; and he, therefore, begged now to give notice, that in consequence of what had fallen from hon. Members tonight, he should, on a future day, move such an address. He rested perfectly satisfied that, should such an inquiry be instituted, every allegation he had made would be substantiated by the evidence.

Sir *R. Inglis* doubted, whether it were competent to the hon. Member thus to withdraw his motion without the consent of the House. Still less did he think it consistent with the dignity of the House to suffer the motion to be withdrawn, pending such a threat as was conveyed by the notice of motion just given by the hon. Member for Aberdeen, with respect to the physical infirmity of the judges of the Court of Session in Scotland. Unless the hon. Member gave a better reason for the withdrawal of the motion, he should oppose it.

Mr. *Bannerman* would meet the hon. Baronet by asking one question of the hon. Baronet, the Member for Stamford. Did the hon. Baronet ever hear of one of these Scotch judges having, when about to deliver a judgment, folding his hands after the manner of one about to say grace at a dinner, and uttered aloud the words, "For what we are about to receive, may the Lord make us truly thankful?"

Sir *George Clerk* had heard the absurd story in question. He heard it from the hon. Member himself one day in the street, and he then told the hon. Member that he did not believe it, and that he thought it was a joke. With regard to the question of the physical infirmity of the judges in question, he was comparatively indifferent, while he had the high legal testimony of the hon. and learned Member for the Tower Hamlets to their unimpaired mental energies, as exhibited in the judgments which in the course of his professional career he had been in the habit of reading and considering.

Sir *Charles Grey*, if the hon. Baronet forced the House to a division, would oppose the motion of the hon. Member for Aberdeen; but he would do so solely on the ground taken by the right hon. Gentleman, the Member for Montgomeryshire—that no case of breach of the privileges of that House had been made out.

Motion negatived.

MUNICIPAL CORPORATIONS (IRELAND).] Lord *Stanley*, in rising to address the House on the question that this Bill be read a second time, expressed his regret, that not having anticipated during this Session any more opposition to the second reading of this measure than was offered last Session in the same stage, he was not present on a former occasion when some debate arose on the question of the second reading. The opposition then offered to the second reading was, he believed, mainly founded on the lateness of the hour at which it was brought forward; but, on the present occasion, he apprehended there was reason to fear, from the intimation conveyed by his hon. Friend the Member for the University of Oxford, that an opposition would be offered to the second reading. He could readily conceive that the friends of the Protestant Establishment of that country, might look with considerable suspicion on this Bill, both on account of the power which they might imagine it would give, and the spirit in which they might conceive from the actions of the Government that the powers so conferred would be exercised, and he could easily conceive that the suspicions so excited in their minds, and still more strongly impressed on them by their constituents, might have derived increased force and power from some recent appointments that had taken place, which they might not think generally conducive to the interests of that Protestant Establishment. But while he repeated the motives and made allowance for the conduct of those Gentlemen, he could not imitate their conduct in opposing the second reading of the Bill, and he would shortly state to the House on what ground he conceived himself pledged and obliged in honour not to oppose it. He entertained considerable doubts whether the Bill would effect the purpose at which it professed to aim—namely, that of providing for the good, the quiet, and the efficient local Government of the cities and boroughs of Ireland. He entertained, as he had formerly entertained, a very strong opinion that for the peace and good Government of Ireland it would be infinitely better that these corporations should be altogether extinguished, than that there should be left a certain number of local parliaments in the towns of Ireland, tending, he feared, to the promotion rather of religious and political animosity than of concord and harmony. But it was too late to raise that question now. The House of Commons had decided, and that by a large majority, against the proposal made to carry this view into effect. He and his Friends had in a former Session of Parliament assented to and acquiesced in that decision, and pledged themselves, both in that and the other House, that when two measures should be completed which they deemed essential to the safe working of the proposed corporation system, and the security of the Protestant Church, they would then address themselves to provide a plan of Municipal Reform for Ireland on the principal of popular election. These measures had been now passed into law; a Poor-law Bill had been passed which would be, or might be, made an effectual check on the *bonâ fide* character of the franchise, under which the municipal elections would be carried on. A Bill had been also passed for the settlement of the Irish tithe question, which he trusted would give additional stability to the Protestant Church, and which was stripped of that noxious provision declared by Government to be essential and indispensable, but to which they (the Opposition) had declared, that no consideration would ever induce them to consent. Having, then, obtained two measures, one of which would be a material assistance in fixing the franchise, and the other would, he trusted and believed, disappoint the hopes expressed by the noble Lord who was now Viceroy of Ireland, he asked whether in honour and consistency they were not pledged to fulfil their part of the contract, and enter frankly and fairly on the business of granting corporations to Ireland. He knew not how this might strike other Gentlemen, but as a gentleman, and a man of honour, he held himself bound by the pledge formerly given, and from that pledge nothing should induce him to swerve. He knew it might be said that the recent appointment had caused great alarm and consternation among the Members of the Protestant Church of Ireland. He did not deny that there were reasonable grounds of apprehension from this cause, but he would rather hope that the noble Lord sent to that country would adhere to his late declaration, that, whatever might be his private opinion, he would go thither not to change the law, but to administer the law as it stood, and to administer it fearlessly and impartially for the protection of those whom he was to govern. But, whatever might be the course which the noble Lord was about to pursue, when they agreed to the passage of those two measures, the Irish Tithe Commutation Act, and the Irish Poor Relief Act, they consented to a Municipal Bill for Ireland, and what they had now to do with the noble Lord or his measures he did not understand. Did they stipulate with hon. Gentlemen opposite what should be the future tone of the Irish Government? Did they name who should be Viceroy of Ireland? It was true they did not expect Lord Ebrington to be sent thither, but were they perfectly satisfied with Lord Normanby? With Lord Normanby and his noble Friend opposite, as Chief Secretary, who conducted the Government with great ability certainly, but on principles not, by any means, the same as those which were the principles of the civil government under the administration of Earl Grey—with Lord Normanby and his noble Friend in office, he said, they gave a pledge that when the two measures to which he referred were passed, they would entertain the measure for Municipal Corporation Reform in Ireland, with the intent of giving it a full and fair deliberation, and, if possible, carrying it into effect. That pledge, as he had said, he could not break. On the contrary, he was bound to say he should vote in support of the second reading of the Bill, and while he pledged himself to give Municipal Corporations to Ireland on the principle of popular election, he adhered, as firmly as he said he should last year, to the conditions of the pledge he had mentioned. But in saying this he begged to declare that he would not be turned or drawn to agree to a lower franchise or to a different one from that to which he had assented last year: and in assenting to the second reading of the Bill, he also wished to guard against the possibility of being supposed to assent to the new principle which had been introduced by the noble Lord, whereby a different constituency was prospectively established: that was, it was to come into operation at the end of two years. With reference to his own share in the steps taken last Session on this Bill, he stated the ground of his objection to the measure to be that its operation was impossible. This was the ground of objection he alleged. But when a man states at one time that he objects to a measure because he knows and has found it to be physically impossible, it did not follow that he was bound, when that measure was found to be possible, to give his assent to it in the gross. Queen Elizabeth was perfectly satisfied with the apology of the mayor who explained that he could not fire the guns of his town in honour of her arrival for twelve reasons; she was quite satisfied with the first of them, in which the mayor told her he had no gunpowder; she was perfectly satisfied, because the thing was impossible; but if next year, when that impossibility was removed, the Queen had refused to listen to any of the remaining eleven reasons, she would have acted unjustly. As he no longer felt the measure to be impossible, he was now prepared to vote for the second reading; but he was not prepared to intrust with political power a constituency that was untried and inexperienced, of which he knew neither the number nor the aptitude for political business. Still, he had no hesitation in saying, that if, after experience, it was found that the proposed constituency were more independent in the exercise of the franchise than the 10*l.* householders—if they were found to be less under the influence of the Roman

Catholic clergy—if it were shown that they were as likely to choose a man well, considering only his political fitness, and without reference to his religious creed—then, and then only, would his noble Friend opposite be entitled to call upon him to substitute that constituency which he now proposed for that of the 10*l.* householder. But when he heard of the way in which these constituencies had exercised the first functions which they had been called upon to exercise, he felt very great doubts as to the propriety of intrusting them with this additional power. It was with very great regret that he had heard accounts from various places throughout almost, he might say, the whole of the south of Ireland, of the way in which the late measure of poor relief had been carried into effect. The result of the measures adopted in the places to which he referred, was not what it ought to have been; for the measure was one which required the utmost caution and care in carrying it into execution. He had heard of no place almost in the south of Ireland, but the influence of the Roman Catholic priest was predominant in those constituencies, who appointed officers whose qualification was not aptitude for business, but the profession of the Roman Catholic faith. At the same time, he begged to state, that he was fully prepared to enter into the discussion of the bill with the settled purpose, that it should pass into a law, that so the only yet remaining of the three texts of Irish agitation might be got rid of. But he hoped, that he might not be misunderstood with respect to the 10*l.* franchise: when he spoke of a constituency of 10*l.* householders he meant, that it should be tested, not by the payment of rent to that nominal amount, but by liability to assessment which shall prove, that the amount is really 10*l.* He had thought it necessary to state, at that early stage of the bill, the course which he, as an individual, meant to pursue. It was not his intention to question the motives of the conduct of any hon. Member whatever; he knew little or nothing of the nature of the opposition which it was intended to offer to the bill; and if the House, following the bad example of last Session, went to a division, as he hoped they would not, he should feel it his duty to give his vote for the second reading.

Sir *R. H. Inglis* said, his noble Friend, in saying, that as a man of fairness and honour, he felt bound to support the second reading of this bill, had said what, in his opinion, almost amounted to an imputation that those were not men of fairness and honour, who voted against it. But he would tell his noble Friend, that he, for one, was no party to any such compact as his noble Friend had referred to; his noble Friend could not quote one vote of his on the Irish Tithe Bill, or on the Poor-Relief Bill, which bore that interpretation. He had never assented to those measures as grounds in any degree justifying the passing of the Irish Municipal Corporation Reform Bill. The value and importance of those institutions to Ireland, to the Union, and to Great Britain, were deeply impressed on his mind. Municipal corporations were originally established in many parts of Ireland for loftier, and holier, objects than mere municipal business; they were, then, as they yet remained, to a great degree, the connecting links between the Protestantism of England and Ireland. This at least, was the definite and distinct object of the foundation of those of the north of Ireland; he was aware there were other corporations, of a prior date, which were not so specifically designed for the purpose which he had mentioned. But the one class was swept away by the bill with as little remorse as the other; and what was it meant to raise up in their stead? He never had consented to the bill of last Session; he had offered it every opposition up to the second reading; but when that stage was passed, then he had endeavoured to render it as little objectionable as possible. However, he would have been better content to have left the corporations of Ireland as they were, subject to the law of the land. He was aware of the difference between the present bill and that of last Session; but no one could deny, that up to the second reading of a bill, he was entitled to consider all differences as merged, and to look upon the measure, in general, as a bill for the annihilation of the present municipal corporations in Ireland, and the erection of Roman Catholic corporations in their stead. Still, if he were defeated on the motion which he was about to propose, he should possibly find himself enabled to follow his noble Friend in all the amendments which he might suggest; but till then he would not quit the vantage ground of principle which he possessed in the course he was pursuing. In his apprehensions of the evil to be anticipated from the measure, he could not be deceived; he took its character from its friends, not from its enemies. The hon. and learned Member for Dublin, and the hon. and learned Member for Liskeard had both sufficiently declared what was its real scope and tendency when last the bill was before the House. Both those hon. Members had said enough to show, that the true character of the bill was hostility to the Established Church; and several other hon. Members might be quoted all concurring in giving the same view of it. This was held to be its tendency by the hon. and learned Member for Dublin, of whom, whatever else might be said of him, it would not be denied, that he was a man who showed extraordinary sagacity in discovering the best means of accomplishing his ends. Even last night he had heard the hon. and learned Member, when speaking on the subject of ejectment of tenants, in one of those audible whispers which he (Sir R. Inglis) believed it was the hon. and learned Member's intention, should be heard throughout the House, speaking of the conduct of certain Irish landlords, in the ejectment of tenants, introduce one word, "Saxons"; and this, he might remark, was a term which he had often heard the hon. and learned Member apply in his speeches, or, perhaps, he should rather say, had often read in his speeches, as applicable to the English. [Mr. *O'Connell*: I did not say any such thing.] In that case he had been deceived, and he withdrew the statement on the denial of the hon. and learned Member; but the hon. and learned Member would not deny that he often used the term "Saxons" so applied. The hon. and learned Member would not deny, that an hon. Member not then present was sitting near him on the occasion he referred to last night, whom, when in the chair, of a meeting in the south of Ireland, the hon. and learned Member had lately addressed with peculiar unction in the words—"You, at least, are no intruder, you are no Saxon, you are of the ancient race." That the hon. and learned Member was in the habit of holding such language was notorious to the country; and the hon. and learned Member would not deny, that the tendency of this measure was to transfer property and its accompanying influence in the corporate towns into the hands of others than those who now possessed that influence. As he had said, not being a party to any compact whereby the other two other measures were given for this, he was not prepared to assent to the second reading of the bill, The present proposal was one for destroying the supports of Protestantism in Ireland. He talked not of the date of the corporation of Dublin or of the decided stand which that corporation made; but when he recollected what the corporation of Dublin and other corporations had done, he for one would not lend his hand to the destruction of any one of them. Not believing this measure to be necessary, and seeing the evils in itself and in its consequences, no consideration of personal respect and regard towards those with whom he usually acted should induce him to desert what he felt to be his duty. It was that feeling, and on that feeling of a deep sense of duty, that he hoped at least the second reading of this bill would be deferred to that day six months.

Mr. *Blackstone* begged to assure the noble Lord and the hon. Gentleman, that the course he had pursued on that day se'nnight, in reference to this bill, introduced at a very late hour, twelve o'clock, had not been done with any factious motives. But he had never had an opportunity of giving a vote against this bill, and therefore wished that the bill should be discussed at an early stage, that he might have an opportunity of giving his vote distinctly against it. He denied that he was a party to any compromise on this question. He must confess, that if the noble Lord had introduced the bill sent down from the House of Lords last year, it might have been an object to him to have given his assent to the bill; but not only had a bill been introduced with a lower franchise, but it was stated by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, that the franchise sent down from the Lords would be an insult to the people of Ireland. He was one who looked on the measure of sending the noble Viceroy recently appointed to that country with dismay; and before he voted for this measure, he should wish to know what his intentions and motives were. He mentioned this solely with the impression that the church was exposed to considerable danger. He would not vote for a measure which he was of opinion was fraught with danger to the Protestant interests. But the noble Member for North Lancashire had stated, that he considered he was bound in honour to enter into this measure. He could assure the House, that he, for one, never entered into any such contract. He confessed, that he did not see that they had any valuable return for what had been given. What had they got for the appropriation clause? Had that clause ever passed by a majority of more than thirty, very often down nearly to twenty? And since the election had the noble Lord ever ventured to introduce the appropriation clause into the House? Because he knew that there had been a great change in the feeling of the public. The appropriation clause could never have been passed by that House. Was he to be told that they were to sacrifice the Protestant institutions, because they gave the Poor-law Bill? He could assure the House, that the Protestant landlords did not take the Poor-law Bill as any boon. It might be a very good criterion to fix the qualifications by, but he held it perfectly valueless as a boon to the Protestant institutions. He was one of those who saw very little analogy between corporations in England and Ireland. He held that the corporations in England were elected for a very different purpose. The English corporations had been given rather with a view of supporting the party in power. The corporations had been tyrannically wrested from the people in the time of Charles II., and he called it a restoration to give them back to the people. But there was no analogy to this with the Irish corporations; they had never been given but for Protestant purposes and for Protestant support. If this bill were granted, it would transfer the power of these corporations from the Protestants to the Roman Catholics. He would ask hon. Members whether they conceived, if a 10*l.* franchise were granted, it would prevent the transfer of the power of the corporations to the Roman Catholics? If that very transfer would be made of the power in corporations from the Protestant to the RomanCatholic, he asked them why they should not oppose the second reading, and give their decided objection to this measure? Let them fight the battle nobly, even if they must be beaten—but let them not give up the Protestant institutions they were bound to respect for the sake of political expediency. He did oppose any further grant to Ireland against the Church, for no sooner would this question be settled, than a question for the subversion of the Church Establishment would be propounded to them. He was one for making a stand against any further encroachments on the Protestant religion; he felt that he was doing his duty towards his country in so acting, and therefore he cordially seconded the motion of the hon. Gentleman.

Mr. *Shaw* hoped the House would allow him to state, in a few words, his feelings with regard to the measure then before them, and the course which he meant to take respecting it. His individual opinion on the general question of Irish corporations had been from the first, and remained unaltered, that it would be, under the existing circumstances of Ireland, more conducive to the general advantage of the community, and the good management of the cities and towns in that country, that the existing corporations should be simply abolished. With respect to the present bill, he had many objections to its details; he would, in Committee, endeavour to amend it—and if it appeared in its present form, or not very materially altered on the third reading, he should vote against it. But he felt bound, by personal honour and good faith, to give an opportunity to the Government of submitting a bill based on the principle of popular election, for the consideration and amendment of a committee. For two years he and the party with whom he had the honour to act had used their utmost efforts to carry a measure for the abolition of corporations; but from the construction of the great political parties into which the House was divided, and the dissent of many of their own party from that proposition, it became impossible to maintain it. In the end, then, of the Session of 1837, the Duke of Wellington announced, that if the appropriation clause was abandoned, and a standard of value for the franchise provided by the Poor-law Bill—that he would consent to the passing of a corporation bill, on the principle of the present. Considering the source from whence that declaration proceeded—the known influence the illustrious Duke possessed, and the entire confidence reposed in him by the great party of which he was the head, seeing moreover that the conditions he had required had been granted, he thought, that the party were under an undoubted obligation to perform their portion of the contract. It was a subject on which he (Mr. Shaw) could not take a neutral part. He had, therefore, during the last Session been a party, a reluctant one it was true—but, nevertheless a party to the proceedings taken on that ground; and he could not with consistency or honour now recede from them. He had already incurred some odium on that account, and his vote that night would probably draw down more upon him. The corporation of Dublin, by the hands of their Lord Mayor, had, in the course of the evening, presented a petition against the bill. He was officially connected with, he was bound by various ties to, that ancient body, and very sorry to differ from them; but all these considerations could not weigh with him when put in comparison with personal honour and good faith; to these all other motives must give place. He meant to cast no imputation upon others; his hon. Friends who might oppose the second reading of the bill, were, he was persuaded, as sensitively alive to their honour and character as it was possible for him to be to his; they were in general also differently circumstanced from him. He regretted, that a division should for the first time since the commencement of their discussions be taken on the stage of the second reading of the bill; but as it was—under the circumstances, and constrained by the obligations of personal honour and good faith to which he had adverted—he had no option left but to vote against the amendment.

Mr. *H. Grattan* rose to set himself right with respect to the bill before the House. They would allow him to observe, that this opposition was all idle on the part of the hon. Member; the question had been decided over and over again; it had been decided in that House and in another place. Now, he would suggest to the kind and ardent disposition of the hon. Baronet opposite, whether it were wise or politic to exasperate the public mind by entering on this fruitless course. The hon. Baronet considered this as a battle against the Church, and had introduced the word "Saxon." The people of Ireland had no battle against the Church, but if the Church or the Saxons battled against them, they must battle against the Saxons and the Church. ["*Hear, hear!*"] He would answer the "Hear, hear." The battle had been commenced in a place near that House. They had heard the most virulent abuse of his own country, of his own countrymen, and of the religion of the majority. He might say "*terrorum et fraudis abunde est.*" He admitted, that there might be questions on both sides; but if the people of this country and those who opposed the measure embittered their opposition with religious animosity, there would be war interminable. He might say, that Ireland was becoming Catholic. They were making it so. It would not satisfy them (the people of England) to make it Protestant, but they must make it Orange, and drive out the Catholics. The people of Ireland had answered them in plain intelligible language—"You are settlers, and if you make war with us, we will drive you out and your race." That was plain speaking, and they might depend upon it, as sure as he was of his own existence, if they persevered in the course they were adopting, they would not only make Ireland Catholic, but they would make her, what he hoped she would never be, anti-English. If the hon. Member read Irish history, he would find, that many of the towns had Corporations, not bestowed, as had been stated, for Protestant purposes. Such were Galway, Waterford, and Wexford. The charter of the corporation of the city of Dublin was given to it by Henry 2nd, not by English Protestants, but by English Catholics. They talked of this act as if it were an anti-Christian act, and not a Protestant one. That was an error. When Lord Donoughmore wanted to permit a certain number of the most respectable Roman Catholics to be admitted into the corporation of Dublin in the time of Lord Wellesley, the most violent opposition was made to it by the Protestant corporation; and the Roman Catholics would certainly oppose the admission of Protestants into the corporations, unless on both sides they downed their arms and put aside opposition. Such would be the state of the case. He might make an angry speech at what had been said, and if hon. Members chose, he should do it. He was sure, that any individual who had heard what had passed in another place would be so disposed. He thought, that the measure which had been passed in another place was unjust to the people of Ireland. He thought it was wrong to give to the minority that which ought to belong to the majority, whose right it was by nature and by providence. In conclusion, the hon. Member said, that on a former occasion a statement of his had been denied in the most unqualified manner by the hon. Member for Coleraine. His statement was, that the corporation of Dublin had been decreed to repay the citizens of Dublin 75,000*l.*, of which they had robbed them—and to this hour they continued to evade the decree of the House of Lords. Since the last debate he had written to Dublin to ascertain how the facts really stood, and he now held in his hand a letter from Mr. Peter Brophy, sustaining in every particular his statements. He thought it, therefore, unwise in the hon. Member for Coleraine to contradict that which now turned out to be perfectly true.

Mr. *D'Israeli* said, that he would trespass on the attention of the House for only a very short time. In the outset of his remarks, he begged to disclaim those feelings of religious bigotry and factious spirit which had been imputed to hon. Members at his side of the House for the part they had taken on this subject on a former evening. He was not influenced by any such feeling. Whether the people of Ireland were idolaters or iconoclasts, were circumstances on which he should not dwell in considering any measure relating to the welfare of that country. He had always thought that the question with respect to Ireland was, what was the character of its Government, whether it should be local or central. In England, where society was strong, they tolerated a weak Government; but in Ireland, where society was weak, the policy should be to have the Government strong. Had that policy been acted upon? It was a much-mooted dogma of the present day—for which he believed they had to thank the hon. and learned Member for Dublin—that the people of the two countries should have equal rights. The object which that hon. and learned Gentleman sought was, that the people of Ireland should enjoy the fullest share of civil and religious rights and privileges. ["*Hear, hear,* from Mr. O'Connell.] He hailed that cheer, for on it he would build his argument. The constitution of the country embraced Church and State. Would the hon. and learned Gentleman accept the whole, or would he reject one moiety—the Church? No doubt the hon. and learned Gentleman would not accept that moiety. He would call it a foreign innovation which he would oppose. If the hon. and learned Member sought for identity of institutions, he must accept the constitution in Church as well as in State. If he did not, what then became of his call for identity of institutions? The learned Gentleman was a great political casuist; he was eminently skilled in construing the meaning of an Act of Parliament and interpreting the obligation of an oath. He would, therefore, wish him to accept of the dilemma which he now offered to him. The Government of Ireland—he spoke not of that of the present day in particular—had always acted on the central principle, on the principle opposed to that of the hon. and learned Member for Dublin. It acted on the principle that there should be different institutions for the two countries. How else could the noble Lord the Secretary for the Home Department defend the system of an armed police through Ireland—how else could he justify the extensive employment of stipendiary magistrates through that country—so different from the system in this kingdom? The only system on which any reliance seemed to be placed with respect to Ireland was that of centralized Government? What had been the result of any attempt to act on any other principle? What had been the principle of the Irish Government for the last forty years; he cared not whether the Government was Whig or Tory, Conservative or Destructive, Orange or Green? What was that system? It was one which was not known to classic history, not to be found in the annals of feudal christendom. In looking to those periods they might find secret treason, or bold and blustering sedition, but they could not find agitation. They could not discover that refined product of modern invention, by which a man might violate the law by means of the law. That discovery was reserved for modern times, and was now carried out to its full extent; and while it existed he did not think that such a measure as this should be passed for Ireland. For this reason he would oppose the second reading of this Bill. He would not do anything to check the ambition of the Roman Catholics of Ireland. They had the Cabinet of the Sovereign, and the two Houses of the Legislature open to them, and under these circumstances he thought they should let their country be still for a time. The more they sought power the more they should try to secure order and peace as the basis of national greatness. With these feelings he should feel it his duty to oppose the second reading of this Bill.

Mr. *Litton* said, that on the night alluded to by the hon. Member for Meath, (Mr. Grattan), that hon. Member had made a statement highly injurious to the Corporation of Dublin. It was to the effect that while they were indebted upwards of 70,000*l.* to the citizens of Dublin, they were, in place of paying their just debts, distributing the revenues of the Corporation amongst themselves. He warned the hon. Member for Meath not to make such an averment against the body, or against any of the individuals composing it; and he would now re-assert, that the hon. Member made the statement without one tittle of foundation for it. When he arrived in Dublin, shortly after the discussion alluded to, he sent for the solicitors of the Corporation, and they convinced him that his (Mr. Litton's) statement was fully borne out by the facts. There was five years ago a decree of the Court of Chancery obtained against the Corporation for 75,000*l.*, which it may be said, in one sense, was money they had misapplied. The Corporation defended the suit on the ground that they had a perfect right to act as they had done. The House of Lords, however, held a contrary opinion. Now, 69,000*l.* of the sum decreed against the Corporation had been paid in cash, and six thousand had been raised on the property of the Corporation. In order to raise that 69,000*l.* the corporation issued debentures, and a second information was filed against them by Mr. Brophy. The decree was to the effect that the Corporation must redeem the debentures and cancel them, but at the same time it was declared they had a right to raise the money on their surplus funds, just as much right in fact as he (Mr. Litton) had to mortgage his estates. He had in his possession the certificate of the Master in Chancery, which stated that the debentures had been brought into his office and cancelled. Now with respect to the question more immediately before the House, he regretted that he felt obliged to vote on this occasion in a different manner from those under whose political banners he had been proud to enlist himself, and with whom he generally agreed, but upon this subject he had not considered himself bound by any compact. He was not in Parliament when any such compact had been entered into. Although he was present when the Bill was last before the House he did not call for a division on the second reading—but he contended that the idea of being bound by any contract because he did not divide, never for a moment entered his mind. But suppose he had entered into such a contract, he would ask, as a man of honour, whether such a contract could be binding, when the Government had failed to perform their part of it? It had been said that the Tithe Bill was understood to have been a condition on which this measure should be conceded; but even that Bill the Ministers had done all they could to render as bad as possible; for although the appropriation clause had been abandoned, yet that had not been done in aid of the Church, but because the government could not carry it, and it was by a small majority only that that protection for the Church had been obtained. Ministers, he asserted, had not kept faith with respect to that Bill. On the contrary, they did all in their power to diminish the revenues of the clergy. Now, as to the Corporation Bill, the Ministers brought in a Bill with a most objectionable qualification. This was opposed by the conservatives, who proposed one of a higher standard, and thought Ministers should have met them halfway; but Ministers did not think fit to do so. On the contrary, the franchise they proposed would have the effect of swamping the respectable inhabitants, and must necessarily transfer all corporate power to men who, from education and character, were unfitted for such purposes. When that Bill was carried, with certain modifications, in the House of Lords, and sent back here, was it the conservatives who rejected it? No; it was rejected by Ministers. It had been said that the conservatives had broken their compact, because they opposed the second reading of the Bill, which contained altogether a different qualification from that introduced last Session. He agreed that there ought to be a reform in the Irish corporations. The present measure, however, was not a Bill containing the proper principles of reform, and therefore, he felt himself at liberty to oppose the second reading.

Sir *R. Peel* said, that the prominent part, that he had taken in the preceding discussion on the question of the municipal corporations, made him very unwilling to give a silent vote upon the subject now. The question he had to decide to night was, whether by his vote he should imply, that he was ready to reconstruct the Irish municipal corporations upon the principle of popular election, or whether he should propose to depart from the course which was pursued in the last and preceding Sessions, and withhold his assent from the re-constitution of the Irish corporations on the elective principle. He would shortly refer to the history of the discussions on this question. In 1834 they had reformed the corporations of England, They destroyed the self-elective principle, and introduced in lieu of it the principle of popular election. In 1836, having a report on the Irish corporations, they had to determine whether they would apply the same principles to the Irish corporations; and if so, what course they should pursue. Was it possible to maintain in Ireland the self-elective principle after they had destroyed it in England? was it possible, after having removed the civil disabilities under which the Roman Catholics laboured, and after finding, that those Roman Catholics were not practically admitted into the municipal corporations of Ireland, to maintain this principle, that all corporations should remain precisely on the basis on which they were before, namely, that the existing corporators should be allowed to fill up vacancies by election, when these vacancies continued, generally speaking, to be filled by the persons of Protestants? They found, that course to be impossible. They did propose, after consideration, a plan which would have introduced a diversity of institution between England and Ireland, but which would have maintained civil equality in Ireland. That course, in his opinion under the circumstances of Ireland, would have been the wisest course. That was his opinion. When it was proposed to consider what provision could be made for local government in Ireland, it was found, in fact, that the chief corporation —the corporation of Dublin — had, in consequence of the establishment of other constitutions of local government, really few functions to perform connected with such government. Considering, then, that these were the circumstances of Ireland, a bill might have been introduced which entitled every town to provide for the purposes of local government, without municipal corporations. The wisest course to pursue in the convulsed state of the country by political and religious parties, would have been, in his opinion, to abolish corporations altogether, and to provide otherwise for the management of local affairs. He felt, therefore, when the Government proposed their Corporation Bill in 1836, that it was the wisest course to assent to the second reading of that bill. He must remark, they never yet had offered any opposition to the second reading of a municipal bill for Ireland—they had never maintained the principle, that the Irish corporations should remain intact on their own basis. When they refused their assent to the principle of remodelling the Irish corporations, they admitted, he might say generally, if not universally, the necessity of reform, and they did not contest the principle involved in the bill. They took no division upon it. In 1836 and 1837 they maintained the principle that the Irish corporations should be abolished. But it was impossible to disguise from themselves now this fact—that their minorities on this, comparatively with other questions, were small. On the first occasion the majority against them was not less than eighty. On the second occasion it was about the same. It was necessary, then, to determine what practical course to pursue. He wished it was in his power to take the course which some of his hon. Friends might take, namely, to act with what was called exactly consistent principles, and give their individual votes against any change whatever. That certainly was a course exceedingly convenient, and exceedingly acceptable to those who could follow it. But those who were honoured—and he felt it the greatest honour, that could be conferred upon him in public life, infinitely greater than the most distinguished rank or office—those who were honoured with the confidence of the leading gentlemen of England, in the most powerful party, that ever yet acted in opposition to a government, could not take that convenient course. In proportion to the importance of that powerful party, and to the greatness of the influence which the confidence of that party gave, was the obligation to consider comprehensively the whole state of the country, and the difficulties which environed the settlement of a question that called for their decision. However desirable it might be to adhere systematically to an opinion, to express no sentiments at variance with those formerly entertained, and however convenient it might be for individuals to think, that they had always pursued the same course, it was impossible for a great party to risk the loss of public confidence by refusing any modification of their opinion which difficulties in public affairs might render advisable. Upon this subject they found a difference between the two Houses of Parliament, a difference which promised to be eternal if neither receded in the slightest degree from its opinions. He and those who acted with him, therefore, determined to consider, under the existing difficulties, and upon the whole, what was the wisest course for the great interest which they wished to protect—he meant the interest of the Protestant Establishment in Ireland; whether it were better, that the two Houses should remain in eternal conflict on the subject, or whether they should apply their minds to an amicable arrangement. But he must be allowed to say, for his own justification, if any justification were necessary, and without calling in question the motives by which his hon. Friends were determined in their differences on this question that these differences should not, in the slightest degree, affect their cordial and united advocacy and support of the great principles in which they concurred. Differences there were; but if, from these differences, the Gentlemen opposite hoped to see any permanent dissension in the party, they would be miserably disappointed. He gave his unhesitating and most cordial support to the second reading of the present bill. He would try to effect a settlement on safe principles, but those would be disappointed who expected that differences on this subject among his hon. Friends behind him would sow the seeds of permanent dissension for the advantage of their enemies. Sensible as he was of the caution which ought to be used by one in his situation, and knowing the difficulties which presented themselves in 1837, he had given no new pledge, entered into no new engagements; this his hon. Friends must do him the justice to admit—without consulting every man willing to express a difference of opinion, and without feeling himself fortified, he would not say by the universal assent of the party, but by such a general assent as he could hardly have calculated upon, and which was a perfect warrant for the declarations of 1837. What was the declaration by which, without calling in question the motives of other men, he, as the representative of a great party, felt himself bound in full faith to abide? It was this: They thought the Irish Poor-law Bill and the Irish Tithe Bill were inseparably connected with the question of municipal reform. Their opponents denied it. They said there was no such connection. He and those who acted with him, said this—" Give us an Irish Poor-law Bill, with the test of value which that Bill will furnish—give us an Irish Tithe Bill to our satisfaction, and then we will frankly consider the policy of remoddelling the Irish corporations." As his noble Friend (Lord Stanley) had said, they had got both. Now, upon this subject, he must deny any idea of a contract. There was no secret understanding. He was as free as air as to any private understanding in which the ministry was concerned. It had been, and should be, his uniform care in public life to avoid all private understandings and agreements with those to whom in public he was decidedly opposed. Nothing involving an obligation in any way to her Majesty's Ministers had ever passed his lips on the subject. His course had been taken in the face of Parliament and the people, and that course was not to refuse his assent to remodelling corporations on the principle of popular election. What did they require? They required the passing of an Irish Tithe Bill on their own principles; in other words, with the exclusion of the appropriation clause. They gained it. Circumstances must be strong, indeed, which, after they had got the Irish Tithe Bill, and declared they were free to consider a Corporation Bill, should induce them to withhold, not from the Ministry, but from the people interested in this question, the equivalent which they had been ready to pay on the equivalent being granted. His noble Friend (Lord Stanley), in his short, but very able speech, which had, indeed, exhausted the subject, stated, that they had professed no confidence in the Government at the time that declaration was made. At the time that declaration was made, they found the hon. and learned Gentleman (Mr. Pigot) belonging to an association which was admitted to be injurious, selected for an important office. They found Lord Normanby at the head of affairs, and they made no reservation that when his functions should cease, that the Government should appoint a Lord-lieutenant acceptable to their opponents. They made no such reservation. Lord Ebrington was appointed to the office. He could not say, that that appointment entitled him to depart from an engagement made, or having got an Irish Poor-law Bill, and an Irish Tithe Bill, to refuse his assent to the principle of Irish corporations. He did not think the appointment, however strongly he might disapprove of it, a justification of a refusal of corporations. It would be hypocrisy to say, that he thought that a fit appointment. He had heard the speech delivered by the noble Lord (Ebrington) in that House, and he had heard his subsequent explanations. He admitted all the private virtues that were claimed for him. He had no doubt, from his declaration, that he had the intention to administer the law impartially. But he still must regret that any man should be selected for the administration of the law who had told them, that it was his hope that the war against the Irish Church Establishment should be transferred from the poor to the rich. Giving him all credit for private virtues—giving him all credit for good intentions in his administration—he firmly believed that his hands would be paralyzed by the proclamation he had made of his hope that the war against the Established Church should become more formidable. It was not uttered as a prediction; it was not a warning. It was not as if the noble Lord had said, "If you pass this bill, I warn you, it will not insure a settlement of the Church in Ireland. I predict that the hostility will still continue, but that it will be transferred from the poor to the rich." The words were—they were not denied—nothing like a prediction of consequence, but these—"My hope is, that the war will become more formidable." How could he hope, that the power of the law against tithe agitation, against the refusal of the rights of the clergy, would be rigorously enforced, whatever the intention of the noble administrator might be, when that individual had declared his hope to see this formidable hostility continued. He called on them to recollect with what scrutinizing acuteness they watched the appointments he made. From every act of his they had inferred hostility to a certain party in Ireland. When his right hon. Friend, the Member for the University of Dublin (Dr. Lefroy), and his right hon. Friend, the Recorder, were made privy councillors, did they not fasten on the circumstance? Did they not infer hostility from the Roman Catholics, because the nominal office of privy councillor was given to men not holding violent, but strong opinions. Did they not look at the toasts given at a public meeting as a qualification for dismissing men from places of authority? Did they not vindicate such an act on the ground that men could not act impartially after the expression of strong opinions? Did they not attach weight to sentiments so delivered at such public meetings, on the principle that even conviviality was no excuse? After he had selected for the chief administration of affairs in Ireland, his noble Friend, Lord Haddington, and his right hon. Friend who sat near him (Sir H. Hardinge), for the purpose of having individuals who had voted for the emancipation of the Roman Catholics, did they not do all in their power to prejudice the appointments; and because an Orange flag was exhibited over the head of the Lord-lieutenant without his knowledge, and against his desire, accuse him of the most violent partizanship? Was it not inferred, that he was unfit for the office, because this exhibition was calculated to offend the feelings of one class of the people, though he disapproved of the exhibition, and of the presence of party insignia, but was, in that instance, unable to prevent it? Was it not inferred, that he acted with an intention to insult and offend, and therefore was unfit to remain in the administration? Was that impartial justice? After all the Church had gone through, after all the trials to which she had been exposed, after having submitted last Session in a final settlement to the deduction of nearly one-third from her income, was it quite fair—using the test which had been applied to his own administration—was it fair to the minority, or the Protestant population, interested in maintaining the Church with the reduced establishment to which all parties admitted she had a right—was it impartial justice to select for the chief administration of affairs him who declared—not that he prophesied the continuance of agitation—not that the contest of which he, with a prudent sagacity foresaw the consequences would go on, but who publicly declared his hope that the war would continue, and grow more formidable, by being transferred from the poor to the rich; and who founded his support of the bill less on the necessity for a compromise than on the expectation and hope that it would defeat the purposes for which it was enacted. It was their own principle, that the declaration of strong opinions in a country where heated feelings prevailed, was a disqualification for high office; and let them not suppose, that he (Sir R. Peel) could look upon the appointment of Lord Fortescue with satisfaction, or contemplate it without apprehension. He did not. But he had no confidence in the Government before. He had made no reservation on former occasions as to the appointment of a Lord-lieutenant free from objection, and he did not think that, on the ground of Lord Fortescue's appointment, he was entitled to object to or throw any impediment in the way of the attempt to reconstitute the Irish corporations. His engagement had been made, an engagement, he must repeat, he did not make individually, but in every step of the proceeding he conferred with every man who would do him the honour of conferring with him. Nor did he find, at any of those meetings, any one refusing to assent to, or declining to adopt the course that was taken. If there were any who said, that the altered circumstances of the times afforded a sufficient justification, he quarrelled not with their motives, but not considering himself that there was such a justification, he would not in the slightest degree depart this Session from the course pursued in the last. At the same time, he did not deny that it would be most painful to him, if he had given any pledge in the last Session which, although obligatory on him to perform, he now felt to be inconsistent with public policy. This would be painful, but he should still have no doubt that it was the best policy scrupulously to adhere to the obligations of good faith. But he had no doubt upon the matter. It would greatly diminish his satisfaction in maintaining his faith inviolate, if he thought the course he was pursuing contrary to sound policy. But he did not think so. In the present position of the Irish municipal corporations, and after the course which he and others he acted with pursued, he could see no course preferable to forming corporations on principles which they thought safe—principles which they thought calculated to ensure a due influence in these corporations for the Protestant inhabitants. He saw no course but that, and he thought that those who now disapproved of it were bound to tell what they would propose. What would they do in the present state of Irish politics? How would they meet the practical difficulties? Would they propose the extinction of corporations? That course had been condemned repeatedly by large majorities. Would they retain the corporations on their present footing? He thought the question ought to be met and answered. An individual might shrink from it, but a great party, exercising great influence in the country, could not shrink from giving an answer. For his own part, he thought, that no position could be worse than passing it by and shrinking away from that House. What, then, would they do, with Irish corporations? The revenues of those bodies had been taken away. Parliament had done that. Could they repeal the bill, and prevent the alienation of corporate revenues? Were they strong enough to repeal it, and restore the corporations their property? If they could not, how impaired in power would the corporations be without their property? Were they sure that the most respectable inhabitants of cities and towns would take office under such arrangements? Would it not appear, that they had destroyed the efficiency and vitality of the corporations by this course? Should they, then, attempt to annihilate them again, what was the prospect of success? He saw no solution of the difficulty, but in reverting to the first course, and attempting in another form to maintain the principles for which they had contended. It might be said, that agitation would continue. But upon this subject he had been struck by something that had fallen in the course of last night's debate. An hon. Friend, in the course of his speech observed, that the hon. and learned Member for Dublin was completely mistaken if he fancied, that he included the whole Catholic population of Ireland. His hon. and learned Friend observed, that so far from having a million of Precursors the hon. and learned Member admitted, that he had not one-twentieth part of the number. His hon. and learned Friend had also observed, that the whole province of Connaught had subscribed only *55l.* to the Precursor's Society. Now might not this unwillingness to join the agitating society, in a great measure, arise from the hope, that they would redeem their pledge and give the establishment of corporations in Ireland? Might not the hon. and learned Member for Dublin have failed on account of the expectation that the declaration which had been made would be fulfilled. But supposing that they should refuse the measure to which they formerly assented, and be guilty of a violation of good faith in refusing the price which they had been willing to pay for those that were passed, was it not possible that the agitation which his hon. and learned Friend admitted to be unsuccessful might revive with redoubled force, so that the hon. and learned Gentleman opposite should find no difficulty in raising larger funds for the Precursors than *55l.* from the whole province of Connaught? On these considerations and mainly on account of the engagement entered into, as also from a belief, that there was less difficulty attending the attempt at a settlement, than the endeavour to continue them on their present basis, and present alienation, his vote should be given decidedly in favour of the second reading of the bill.

Mr. *M. J. O'Connell* would detain the House for a very short time. An hon. Friend near him had expressed a hope, that the hon. Baronet opposite would not press his motion. Now, he confessed, he should rather be glad if the motion were pressed to a division; for the result would show, the correctness of the statements in which the organs of the party opposite indulged, and the admirable union and harmony which prevailed in their ranks. He should like them to show not only how well they agreed among themselves, but, to use an Irish expression, how well they agreed with themselves. The hon. Member for Maidstone had favoured them with a disquisition on centralized government, which he thought the great remedy for the evils of Ireland. Now it was somewhat strange, that one of the measures, which was peculiarly honoured with the approbation of the hon. Gentleman opposite, was one formed on the very opposite principle to that of centralisation — he meant the Irish Poor Law Bill. Instead of abolishing corporations upon the hon. Member's system, they ought in consistency to apply the principle of local management adopted in the poor-law to the municipal government of the cities and towns. He might remark, that amongst the hon. Gentlemen who were opposite there could not be found one, whatever might be his opinions, or however strong the feelings he entertained, who could declare his disposition to speak in terms of praise of the existing corporations. Sentence had been passed upon them by the right hon. and learned Recorder of Dublin, and no one pleaded for a mitigation of punishment. All appeared to have abandoned them, and not one, save the hon. and learned Member for Coleraine, could put in a plea in justification of them. How, then, he asked, could these Gentlemen who declared their willingness to give up the corporations, and who had agreed to abandon them—with what consistency, he asked, and with what view to a practical result, could they now oppose the second reading of this bill. Was there, he asked those Gentlemen, a chance of their succeeding in their opposition, or did they suppose, that everything they could do, could aid in having the corporations left in their present state. Then, as to the right hon. Baronet who had just sat down, and who had given his reasons for the vote he intended to record that night—that right hon. Gentleman had boasted of his having the honour to be the head of a party—to be in fact the head of the gentry of England. Did the right hon. Gentleman recollect, that there happened to be gentry in Ireland also. And of those gentlemen there was not one, with the exception of the hon. and learned Member for Coleraine, who had declared his opposition to the measure now proposed to the House. With that exception had there been any one other Member from Ireland who expressed his concurrence in the views of the hon. and learned Member for Coleraine. Oh! the hon. Member also concurred in these views—he forgot—the hon. Member was indeed an exception. The hon. Member for Maidstone said, that he was not disposed to take this discussion contemporaneously with the debate of last night; and yet even that hon. Member's own observations manifested his willingness to do that to which he himself had declared himself disinclined, for a great deal of his speech turned upon the unfortunate state of society in Ireland. The hon. Baronet, too, was disposed to adhere to the same course, for he also touched upon the subject of appointments made in Ireland, which had been made the great subject for debate on the preceding night. One hon. Gentleman had dwelt upon the mischiefs of agitation, and the formidable appearance which it had assumed. Now, he asked the hon. Gentleman—who had they to thank for agitation? Those hon. Gentlemen had to thank themselves for agitation, for they had resisted constantly and pertinaciously resisted, the just claims of the Irish people to religious equality; they had done so as long as the people confined themselves to appeal to that House, and confided their cause to the advocacy of eloquent men in that House—

as long as that, and that alone, was done, these claims were resisted by hon. Gentlemen opposite; and religious liberty was granted, not because it was aided by eloquence; but because it was upheld by agitation, and that it was known, that agitation was organized and prevailed throughout Ireland. They had, then, to thank themselves, for that strong agitation, without which a just measure never would have been conceded.

Mr. *Maxwell* said, considering how lately he had come into that House, nothing but a paramount sense of duty could induce him to intrude himself upon it; and he must be a much older Member, and have much more experience, before he could feel justified, under any circumstances, in trespassing at any length on the attention of hon. Members. He would not have risen on the present occasion had not the taunt of the hon. Member for Kerry made it necessary that he should offer a few remarks. It was quite true, as the hon. Member had stated, that no Irish Member on his (Mr. Maxwell's) side of the House, except his hon. Friend, the Member for Coleraine, had as yet expressed his dissent from the course which the right hon. Baronet, the Member for Tamworth, intended to pursue with reference to the bill before the House. The hon. Member for Kerry had alluded to disunion in the Conservative party. In the few words he had spoken on that day week, he had placed himself before the House the free and unfettered representative of a large independent constituency, unattached to any party, unpledged to any leader. He, therefore, for one, had no party to abandon—no leader to desert. [*Cheers.*] He knew the import of those cheers—he knew the pleasure with which hon. Gentlemen opposite would hail any dissention among hon. Gentlemen on the bench on which he stood—among those with whom he felt it an honour and a privilege to act. He was the last man needlessly to differ from those around him; he respected the talents of the right hon. Baronet who was acknowledged to be the worthy leader of the Conservative party in that House; and he confidently expected with him, that hon. Gentlemen opposite would be disappointed in their wishes—that the vote which he and others gave that night would lead to permanent disunion among hon. Gentlemen on his side of the House. It was with grief and sorrow he had observed, that many of those who sat with him had bound their consciences by a pledge, it seemed, given to the opposite side of the House. He, too, had given a pledge freely and voluntarily on the hustings of Cavan, that he never would consent to the principle of the bill. He confessed he was bigot enough, in the vocabulary of hon. Gentlemen opposite, not his own, —he was bigot enough never to acquiesce in the transfer of political power from Protestant to Roman Catholic hands. He would oppose the bill, as calculated to effect three evils—giving an impulse to the democratic principle, increasing the malign and pernicious influence of the Roman Catholic priesthood, and depressing the hopes of the persecuted and oppressed Protestants of Ireland

Mr. Sergeant *Jackson* thought the House would agree with him, that he was entitled to assign a reason for the vote he was about to give. He had heard the sentiments expressed by the noble Lord and the able and eloquent speech of the right hon. Baronet, the Member for Tamworth, and he did not hesitate to say, that his mind was in the same position as theirs. But, while he felt bound to vote for the second reading of this bill, he should feel it to be his duty to see details introduced into the bill to prevent the evil (which was probably in the mind of the facetious Member who did him the honour to laugh at him) of transferring all power from the hands of Protestants, exclusively to the hands of Catholics. The House would permit him to make one observation on a remark which had fallen from the hon. Gentleman opposite. The hon. Gentleman was mistaken if he supposed, that the course which some hon. Gentlemen felt it their duty to pursue on this question indicated anything like division in the ranks of the numerous and respectable party to which he had the honour to belong. The hon. Gentleman would find, if he indulged in such a hope, that he was utterly mistaken. In the great party to which he belonged there was no division, and it would be found, that they were united as one man in their determination to uphold the Protestant institutions of the country. On the measure before the House there might be some difference of opinion as regarded its details, but they were firmly resolved to resist every inroad upon the constitution, and to prevent the Protestants of Ireland from being oppressed by their determined opponents. He would vote for the second reading of the bill, but although he sanctioned that stage of the measure, he should feel himself bound to insist on a *bonâ fide* 10*l.* qualification, tested by rating. He still adhered to the opinion he had formerly expressed, that it would be better to put an end to corporations in Ireland altogether, as there could now be no legitimate occupation for such bodies, and he much feared, that they could be productive of nothing but mischief.

Mr. *Ellis* said, that as it was his intention, if a division took place, to vote for the amendment of the hon. Member for the University of Oxford, he wished to claim the indulgence of the House whilst he as briefly as possible explained the grounds upon which he meant to found his vote. But he first of all desired to inform the hon. and learned Member for the city of Dublin who last addressed them from the opposite benches, that if he supposed, that because a difference of opinion existed on the Conservative side of the House, as to whether or not the second reading of the bill ought to be allowed to pass, that therefore there would hereafter be produced a variance of opinion amongst the powerful and united body of the Opposition relative to any of the essential points of Conservatism, he (Mr. M. O'Connell) would, indeed, as the learned Sergeant (Mr. Jackson) had just stated, find his disappointment to be as great and bitter as his expectation was unreasonable. He (Mr. Ellis) had not the good fortune to hear the opening portion of the speech of the right hon. Baronet the Member for Tamworth, who though he felt himself bound, from the previous declarations he had made, as a public and eminent leader, upon the subject under consideration, to sanction the second reading, would nevertheless be the first, as he felt sure, to respect the independent exercise of individual judgment upon that or any other question. The noble Lord the Member for North Lancashire, who spoke early in the debate, said, that he considered himself bound through his pledge as a man of honour and a gentleman to vote for allowing the bill to go into committee, but at the same time the noble Lord distinctly expressed his doubts that the bill, if passed into law, would tend to the peace, order, and good government of the municipal towns of Ireland. He, however, was wholly unpledged upon the subject, for he had carefully abstained from supporting the third reading of either the Irish Tithe or Poor-Law Bill, believing most firmly, that the first would turn out to be a fruitless concession of a large portion of the revenues of the Irish Church, and that the latter would not work satisfactorily, by reason of its details, for the counties of Ireland. But if there had been any pledge by hon. Members surrounding him, it implied a contract whereby the Government were in the first instance, and previous to the remodelling of corporations in Ireland, to pass a tithe bill to render the Church safe as well as a good Poor law bill. Had the Government kept their part of the contract? True it was, they had expunged the appropriation clause, but he very much questioned whether that would ever have been done if they had not found that after the general election their majority in that House was so small, that it was hopeless for them to expect to carry the principle of appropriation in that Parliament. The Tithe Bill had been no sooner passed than the learned Member for Dublin organized the Precursor Association, its principal object being to abolish tithes in substance, as well as in name. The chief Secretary for Ireland, now a Cabinet Minister of a Government who over and over again asserted during the passing of the Irish Tithe Bill, that it was to be considered as a final compromise of long conflicting opinions, and a measure of peace and conciliation — the chief Secretary immediately afterwards entertained at dinner within the castle of Dublin, the leaders of the Precursor Society. Another noble Lord (the Secretary at War), having declared, that the Irish Church could not long stand, the Secretary for the Home Department, too, having reiterated his former opinion, that the revenues of that Church were more than commensurate with its wants, and, above all, the recent appointment of a Lord-lieutenant whose public speeches against the Established Church in Ireland, were far more hostile than those of any one else — all these things reasonably contributed, in his opinion, to fill with alarm the breasts of the Protestants. The Government themselves, therefore, had not acted with good faith. The right hon. Baronet (Sir R. Peel) had put a fair practical question, which he thought was justly entitled to be answered. It was this; what did those who inclined to oppose the second reading propose to do with the existing corporations? He was favourable in the abstract to the principle of creating municipal bodies; but he freely submitted, that that was not the time to undertake the consideration of establishing them, because the Executive had failed in their public capacity, to discountenance the renewed agitation against the most sacred of all the fundamental institutions of the land, which they ought to have done after Parliament had settled the tithe question; but when he saw, that there was a strong Government instead of a weak one, disposed to keep good faith towards them, then he would readily entertain the proposition for constructing anew Irish corporations. But until he witnessed the existence of both an honest and a strong administration, he could not conscientiously consent to take any step calculated to endanger the dearest rights and interests of the Protestant subjects of these kingdoms. The House divided.— Ayes 300; Noes 39: Majority 261.

List of the AYES.

Abercromby, hn. G.R.
Acheson, Visct.
Acland, Sir T. D.
A'Court, Captain
Adam, Admiral
Aglionby, H. A.
Aglionby, Major
Ainsworth, P.
Alsager, Captain
Archbold, R.
Ashley, Lord
Attwood, T.
Bailey, J. jun.
Baillie, Colonel
Bainbridge, E. T.
Baker, E.
Bannerman, A.
Baring, F. T.
Baring, H. B.
Baring, hon. W. B.
Barnard, E. G.
Barry, G. S.
Beamish, F. B.
Bellew, R. M.
Bentinck, Lord G.
Berkeley, hon. H.
Berkeley, hon. C.
Bernal, Ralph
Bewes, T.
Blackett, C.
Blair, J.
Blake, M. J.
Blake, W. J.
Blennerhassett, A.
Blewitt, R. J.
Blunt, Sir C.
Bodkin, J. J.
Boldero, H. G.
Bolling, W.
Bowes, J.
Bramston, T. W.
Bridgeman, H.
Briscoe, J. I.
Broadley, H.
Brocklehurst, J.
Brodie, W. B.
Brotherton, J.
Browne, R. D.
Brownrigg, S.
Bruges, W. H. L.
Bulwer, Sir L.
Busfield, W.
Butler, hon. Colonel
Byng, G.
Byng, rt. hon. G. S.
Calcraft, J. H.
Callaghan, D.
Campbell, Sir J.
Canning, rt. hn. Sir S.
Cavendish, hon. C.
Cavendish, hon. G. H.
Chalmers, P.
Clerk, Sir G.
Clive, E. B.
Codrington, Admiral
Collier, J.
Colquhoun, J. C.
Compton, H. C.
Conolly, E.
Corry, hon. H.
Craig, W. G.
Crawley, S.
Crompton, Sir S.
Currie, R.
Currie, W.
Dalmeny, Lord
Davies, Colonel
Dennistoun, J,
De Horsey, S. H.
Donkin, Sir R. S.
Douglas, Sir C. E.
Duckworth, S.
Duff, J.
Duke, Sir J.
Dundas, C. W. D.
Du Pre, G.
Elliot, hon. J. E.
Ellice, Capt. A.
Ellice, rt. hon. E.
Ellice, E.
Estcourt, T.
Evans, G.
Evans, W.
Feilden, W.
Ferguson, Sir R. A.
Finch, Francis
Fitzalan, Lord
Fitzgibbon, hon. Col.
Fitzsimon, N.
Fleetwood, Sir P. H.
Fort, J.
Fremantle, Sir T.
French, F.
Gibson, T. M.
Gladstone, W. E.
Gordon, R.
Gordon, hon. Capt.
Goulburn, rt. hon. H.
Graham, rt. hn. Sir J.
Grant, F. W.
Grattan, H.
Grey, Sir G.
Grimsditch, T.
Grimston, Viscount
Grimston, hon. E. H.
Hall, Sir B.
Harcourt, G. S.
Hardinge, right hon. Sir H.
Hawkins, J. H.
Hayter, W. G.
Heathcoate, J.
Hector, C. J.
Henniker, Lord
Herbert, hon. S.
Heron, Sir R.
Hill, Lord A. M. C.
Hindley, C.
Hobhouse, right hon. Sir J.
Hobhouse, T. B.
Hodges, T. L.
Hodgson, R.
Hogg, J. W.
Holmes, hn. W. A'C.
Holmes, W.
Hope, hon. C.
Hope, G. W.
Horsman, E.
Houstoun, G.
Howard, P. H.
Howard, Sir R.
Howick, Viscount
Hughes, W.B.
Hume, J.
Humphery, J.
Hurt, F.
Hutt, W.
Hutton, R.
Jackson, Mr. Serjt.
James, Sir W. C.
Jervis, S.
Johnstone, H.
Jones, Captain
Kemble, H.
Kinnaird, hon. A. F.
Knox, hon. T.
Labouchere, rt. hn. H.
Langdale, hon. C.
Lascelles, hon. W. S.
Law, hon. C. E.
Lefevre, C. S.
Lefroy, rt. hon. T.
Lennox, Lord A.
Leveson, Lord
Liddell, hon. H. T.
Lister, E. C.
Lushington, C.
Lushington, right hon. S.
Lygon, hon. General
Lynch, A. H.
Mackenzie, T.
Mackinnon, W. A.
Macleod, R.
Macnamara, Major
M'Taggart, J.
Maher, J.
Maidstone, Viscount
Marshall, W.
Marsland, H.
Marsland, T.
Martin, J.
Marton, G.
Master, T. W. C.
Maule, hon. Fox
Melgund, Viscount
Mildmay, P. St. J.
Miles, W.
Miles, P. W. S.
Moreton, hon. A. H.
Morpeth, Viscount
Morris, D.
Murray, rt. hon. J. A.
Muskett, G. A.
Nagle, Sir R.
Noel, W. M.
Norreys, Sir D. J.
O'Brien, C.
O'Brien, W. S.
O'Callaghan, hon. C.
O'Connell, M. J.
O'Connell, M.
O'Ferrall, R. M.

Ord, W.
Paget, F.
Pakington, J. S.
Palmer, C. F.
Palmerston, Lord
Parker, J.
Parker, R. T.
Parnell, rt. hn. Sir H.
Patten, J. W.
Pattison, J.
Pechell, Captain
Peel, rt. hon. Sir R.
Pendarves, E. W. W.
Perceval, Colonel
Philips, G. R.
Phillpotts, J.
Pigot, D. R.
Power, J.
Price, Sir R.
Price, R.
Protheroe, E.
Pusey, P.
Redington, T. N.
Rice, rt. hon. T. S.
Rich, H.
Richards, R.
Roche, E. B.
Roche, W.
Roche, Sir D.
Rolfe, Sir R. M.
Rolleston, L.
Round, J.
Rundle, J.
Rushbrooke, Colonel
Russell, Lord J.
Russell, Lord
Salwey, Colonel
Sanford, E. A.
Scarlett, hon. J. Y.
Scholefield, J.
Scrope, G. P.
Seymour, Lord
Sharpe, General
Shaw, right hon. F.
Sheil, R. L.
Shirley, E. J.
Smith, J. A.
Smith, R. V.
Smyth, Sir G. H.
Standish, C.
Stanley, E.
Stanley, Lord
Stanley, M.
Stansfield, W. R.
Staunton, Sir G. T.
Stuart, Lord J.
Stuart, V.
Stock, Dr.
Strickland, Sir G.
Strutt, E.
Sturt, H. C.
Style, Sir C.
Surrey, Earl of
Tancred, H. W.
Teignmouth, Lord
Tennent, J. E.
Thomson, rt. hn. C. P.
Thornely, T.
Townley, R. G.
Trench, Sir F.
Troubridge, Sir E. T.
Turner, E.
Vere, Sir C. B.
Vigors, N. A.
Vivian, J. H.
Waddington, H. S.
Wakley, T.
Walker, R.
Wall, C. B.
Wallace, R.
Warburton, H.
Westenra, hon. H. R
White, A.
White, H.
Whitmore, T.
Wilbraham, G.
Wilde, Mr. Sergeant
Williams, W.
Williams, W. A.
Wilshere, W.
Winnington, T. E.
Winnington, H. J.
Wodehouse, E.
Wood, C.
Wood, Sir M.
Wood, G. W.
Worsley, Lord
Wyse, T.
Yates, J. A.

TELLERS.

Stanley, E. J.
Steuart, R.

List of the NOES.

Adare, Viscount
Archdall, M.
Bagge, W.
Bateson, Sir R.
Broadwood, H.
Bruce, Lord E.
Cole, hon. A. H.
Cole, Viscount
Dick, Q.
D'Israeli, B.
Duncombe, hon. W.
Duncombe, hon. A.
Ellis, J.
Farnham, E. B.
Fector, J. M.
Gore, O. J. R.
Heathcote, Sir W.
Hillsborough, Earl of
Hodgson, F.
Jones, J.
Kelly, F.
Kirk, P.
Litton, E.
Mackenzie, W. F.
Maxwell, hon. S. R.
O'Neill, hon. J. B. R.
Parker, T. A. W.
Pigot, R.
Plumptre, J. P.
Polhill, F.
Pringle, A.
Rushout, G.
Sibthorpe, Colonel
Sinclair, Sir G.
Thomas, Colonel H.
Tollemache, F. J.
Tyrrell, Sir J. T.
Verner, Colonel
Williams, R.
Wood, T.

TELLERS.

Inglis, Sir R. H.
Blackstone, Mr.

SUPPLY.] Lord *J. Russell* moved the Order of the Day for a Committee of Supply.

Mr. *Bagge* moved, that the House do adjourn.

Colonel *Sibthorp* could not but express his disappointment, that the hon. Member for Kilkenny had not now brought forward the motion, with a view to dispense with the office of Viceroy of Ireland, of which the hon. Member had given notice, and upon which he (Colonel Sibthorp) had an important amendment, for the reduction of the salary of the noble Lord the Secretary for Ireland, to propose. It was with great pain, that he had felt himself called upon to vote in the division which had just taken place against the right hon. Baronet, the Member for Tamworth, of whose honour such was his belief, that he would willingly commit to him the whole superintendance of the whole of the affairs of the country. Thinking, that there was some political manœuvre, or that there had been some misunderstanding on that head, he cordially seconded the motion for the adjournment of the House.

Mr. *Hume* said, that as he had been alluded to, he begged to state, that he had not brought forward his motion on going into Committee of Supply, because he had promised several hon. Members, who had spoken to him on the subject, that he would not do so if the debate on the Irish Corporation Bill went beyond half-past ten o'clock. That hour was passed, and it would be unfair to those Gentlemen, now to press the matter forward.

Colonel *Sibthorp:* Then it is a hoax.

Lord *J. Russell* observed, that the course proposed by the hon. Member for Norfolk, seemed an exaggeration of the hon. Member for Salford: he hoped, at this hour (a quarter past 11 o'clock) the hon. Member would not press his amendment.

The House divided on the motion of adjournment: Ayes 1; Noes 276:—Majority 275.

List of the Ayes.

Duncombe, hon. A.

TELLERS.

Mr. Bagge, and Colonel Sibthorp.

[It seems not necessary to publish a list of the Noes.]

Order of the Day read. On the question that the Speaker leave the Chair

Lighting of the House.] Sir *F. Trench* rose to address the House upon a subject which, he said, was not one of great dignity, but which was, nevertheless, of the utmost importance to the convenience and comfort of hon. Members. It was, moreover, a question of justice and fair play. He would ask of hon. Gentlemen who occasionally sat in the gallery, whether they were content with the present system of lighting the House?—whether the light from the lustres did not fall with inconvenient strength upon their eyes? He would ask the same question even of the Speaker himself. The hon. and gallant Gentleman concluded by moving, "That it is the opinion of this House, that the old system of lighting the House of Commons was not satisfactory to the Members who sat in the body of the House, and was 'extremely distressing' to those who sat in the galleries. That, if Gentlemen sitting in the gallery suffered inconvenience, it was fitting that that inconvenience should be immediately remedied." That a Member of this House did undertake to apply a remedy; and that, after much trouble, and many experiments, the existing plan was adopted, and appeared to give general satisfaction up to the close of the last Session. That, before the meeting of Parliament in the present Session, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Hume, and Lord Duncannon, did inspect the "Philosophical Oxygen Bude Light," with a view to its applicability to the lighting the House of Commons; that the making this experiment necessarily implies that the existing system is defective and unsatisfactory, and Members will be called upon to make a comparison between the present system and that system of philosophical light which is contemplated as its substitute. That the lustres now suspended in this House have, in this Session, been deprived of nearly one-third of their intended light, and of all their intended softness. That with a view to justice and a fair trial upon a point so important to the convenience and comfort of the Members of this House, it is "fitting" that the lustres should be presented to their criticism in the manner proposed by the individual to whom was confided the dangerous honour of attempting to make arrangements that might meet with general satisfaction. That, therefore it is the opinion of this House, that the proper officer be directed to replace the branches and candles that have been removed, and to colour the inside of the shades pale green. The expense per night being, for candles, 1*l.* 6*s.* 3*d.*; and for colouring, &c., 7*s.*; total, 1*l.* 13*s.* 3*d.* But the mere machinery for the new plan will cost 2,000*l.*, and the experiment will probably cost 200*l.*

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* suggested to the hon. and gallant Gentleman the propriety of withdrawing his motion. It rested as matter of fact, in the instance of Lord Duncannon, upon what had never happened. The wording of the motion was very objectionable, inasmuch as it referred to expressions which had been used by hon. Members of that House during former debates, which was contrary to the rules of the House.

Sir *F. Trench* said, that he would wait for a few days, when, if he should find that no arrangement had been made in this matter, he would again submit it to the House. He would put the last section of his motion on the votes for another occasion, for the purpose of ascertaining whether the House would make the experiment or not. He would, therefore, for the present withdraw the motion.

Motion withdrawn, and Committee of Supply postponed till Monday.

Maintenance of Insolvent Debtors.] The *Attorney-General* moved for leave to bring in a Bill for the further Relief of Insolvent Debtors in England. The object of the bill was to be attained by the application of a portion of the fund created under the 53rd George 3rd for the maintenance of prisoners. He brought forward the measure at the request of Lord Denman, who conceived it necessary in consequence of the operation of the new Insolvent Act, many persons being unable to procure their discharge from inability to pay the fees.

Lord *Stanley* wished to know what the nature of the fund was which the right hon. Gentleman proposed to allocate to that purpose.

The *Attorney-General* said, that the 53rd George 3rd required the treasurer of every county in England to pay a certain sum for the maintenance of prisoners confined for debt in the King's Bench and Marshalsea prisons. Such was the source and present application of that fund; but, as it would shortly be unappropriated, he proposed to apply a portion of it to the object of this bill.

Sir *J. Graham* thought it quite clear, that this was an appropriation of a tax. From the account given of it by the right hon. Gentleman, it was a tax levied upon the ratepayers, inasmuch as the treasurers of counties, from whom the fund was collected, had no command over any but the county rate. This bill, therefore, involved the appropriation of a fund levied and contributed by the treasurers of counties under a general Act of Parliament. It was clear, that it would be nothing less than a new appropriation of a tax which must be made by a resolution of a Committee of the whole House.

The *Attorney-General* said, that the Act already quoted, provided, that any surplus which might arise, should be applied to Bethlehem Hospital. Now, there never was a surplus; but a surplus would now arise in consequence of the diminution in the number of prisoners confined for debt, and the question was, how that surplus was to be appropriated. If a previous resolution of the House were considered to be necessary, he would, of course, bow to such decision.

The *Speaker* said, the case, as he understood it, stood thus. A fund was to be applied, first, for the benefit of a certain class of prisoners, and next, in case of surplus, to Bethlehem Hospital. What created the surplus now and for the first time? The failure of that class of prisoners. The question to be considered, then, was, whether, in point of fact, that failure having arisen, it was not to be considered as a new appropriation. If there were any doubts upon it, he would suggest the withdrawal of the bill until Monday, that the fact might, in the mean time, be investigated.

Mr. *Hume* thought, they had no right to make a new application of that fund.

Lord *Stanley* observed, that the objection of the hon. Member for Kilkenny was not the only one which could be acted on. In the first instance, the fund was now levied by Act of Parliament, for a specific purpose, and, secondly, according to that Act, there was a further application of that fund. Now, whether were they to cease levying the tax altogether, and then to make a new appropriation for another purpose, or to admit that the original purpose having ceased, Bethlehem Hospital had a direct claim upon it for its support? He apprehended that the Parliamentary and legitimate course would be to consider the matter in a Committee of the whole House, first, in order to protect the public interest, and secondly, in order to take the precaution, that no party, no individual, no body of men, public or private, should be injured by the bill, it being a bill for the levying of money. Bethlehem Hospital, for instance, had a direct interest in the contingent surplus. If the surplus was to be discontinued altogether, then would they be appropriating and levying a new tax; and if they were to make a new appropriation, then would they be depriving a body of what they considered themselves justly entitled to. He really thought the bill ought to be treated as a private bill. It was a case requiring at least the utmost notice which the forms of the House permitted.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* said, that Bethlehem Hospital had no vested right in the fund, a surplus having never yet arisen.

Motion withdrawn.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Monday, March 11, 1839.

MINUTES.] Bill. Read a second time:—Transfer of Aids.

Petitions presented. By the Earl of CAWDOR, and Lords HAWARDEN and REDESDALE, from two places, against the Repeal of the Corn-laws.—By Lord BROUGHAM, from a number of places, for the Repeal of the Corn-laws.—By Lord KENYON, and the Bishop of ST. ASAPH'S, against the Ecclesiastical Revenues Bill.—By the Earl of CAWDOR, Lord REDESDALE, and the Bishop of CHESTER, against the Beer Act.—By the Earl of HADDINGTON, from a place in the Highlands, for Church Extension in Scotland.

SUNDAY DELIVERY OF LETTERS.] The Bishop of *London* had some time since moved for the correspondence which had taken place between the Lords of the Treasury and certain individuals, relative to the delivery of letters on Sundays in the metropolis. On that subject a great degree of interest was felt, and he was anxious to receive some information with respect to it. A memorial, signed by 1,600 solicitors of London, against a Sunday delivery of letters, had been sent to the Lords of the Treasury, and he wished to know whether her Majesty's Government had yet made up their minds as to what they intended to do on this subject? To the memorial of 1,600 solicitors of London no answer had been returned; and in consequence, another meeting had been held on the 5th of this month, at which it was resolved to press Her Majesty's Ministers still further and more warmly on this point. He should, therefore, ask the noble Viscount what the intention of the Government was, and whether such a project was under consideration?

Viscount *Melbourne* said, the plan referred to by the right rev. Prelate had never been entertained, and could not, therefore, be under consideration.

The Bishop of *London* said, it would give great satisfaction to a large number of individuals if they were assured that no apprehension need be entertained that such a plan would be adopted.

Viscount *Melbourne* repeated, that no such plan was intended to be acted on.

CAPTURE OF ADEN.] Lord *Lyndhurst* said that, within the last few days information had been received of the capture of Aden, a fortress on the south-west coast of Arabia, by a British force from Bombay; and that, in possessing themselves of it, a considerable slaughter of the natives had taken place. He believed that the Sultan of Aden had always been on friendly terms with the British Government; and, therefore, he begged to ask the noble Viscount whether the information to which he had alluded was true?

Viscount *Melbourne* said, that the place to which the noble and learned Lord had referred was under the dominion of the Sultan of Aden. Some time ago an attack was made from Aden on one of Her Majesty's vessels. For that outrage satisfaction was demanded, and a full explanation was given. Afterwards a negotiation was set on foot between the East-India Company and the Sultan for the sale of the place. That negotiation was carried through, and the place was ceded; but when the force sent from Bombay for its occupation arrived the son of the Sultan said, "No; the Sultan has no authority to give up the place, and thus to compromise my rights." I must have something equivalent for those rights." Under these circumstances the Government of Bombay thought they had a right to attack the fortress. He should have no objection to lay the papers connected with the affair on the Table.

PRIVILEGE.] The order of the day for taking into consideration the report from the Select Committee on the Petition of John Joseph Lawson, for the production, on a trial for libel, of certain evidence taken before a Select Committee of this House, having been read,

Lord *Lyndhurst* said, he felt it to be his duty to call their Lordships' attention to this Report, as he had the misfortune to differ in opinion from the majority of the Members of the Committee from which it had proceeded. He did so with the greatest respect and deference for the judgment of those noble Lords, for it was possible, he would say it was probable, that he might entertain an erroneous opinion on the subject. But as it was a question connected with the administration of justice, he had, after considering all the arguments advanced in favour of that Report, and not being able, in consequence to alter his opinion, thought it to be his duty to bring the matter before their Lordships; and more particularly, as, if their Lordships agreed with the Report, it would lead to the commission of a very great act of injustice. For the purpose of introducing the question, and enabling their Lordships to understand the subject, he would very shortly state the facts of this case. It appeared that in the last Session of Parliament a Committee of their Lordships was appointed to inquire into the state of New Zealand. Witnesses were called and evidence was given, and on that evidence a report was made to their Lordships. On application being made for that purpose, that report was communicated to the House of Commons. It was ordered to be printed, and, under the authority of the House of Commons, that Report was printed, and circulated, and sold throughout the whole country, by Mr. Hansard, the printer to the House of Commons; and, in consequence of the nature of the subject, it had a most extensive circulation. Now, persons who conceived their interests to be deeply affected by that Report, who felt that that Report reflected on their character, had done that which they conceived they had a right to do; they made certain observations on that Report—a Report so printed, so distributed through the country, and so extensively sold. To make those observations intelligible they did what any one would have done under similar circumstances—they cited a small portion of the evidence; and in consequence of that an action was brought against the printer who printed those observations. That printer, in consequence, justified, according to the legal phrase. That was, he undertook to prove the truth of everything which he had printed. On that plea of justification issue was joined. The Attorney-General was counsel for the defendant (the petitioner at their Lordships' bar). That learned Gentleman said—" It is true this Report was printed and circulated throughout the country—it is true that it is a matter of perfect notoriety—it is a matter which no man disputes; but it is necessary, according to the strict rules of evidence, that the original evidence given by the witness should be produced and proved by an officer of the House of Lords." Accordingly, application was made to the Chief Justice of the Court of Queen's Bench for time to allow an opportunity for making an application to their Lordships' House, to permit the appearance and examination of their officer. The application was acceded to, and the trial was postponed. The Attorney-General said then, and he repeated now, that unless this evidence were allowed, that if their Lordships refused to admit this evidence to be given, there was no defence to the action, although the existence of the evidence was notorious and indisputable. This evidence was clearly necessary to enable the petitioner to substantiate his defence; and application was humbly made to their Lordships to let their officer attend at the trial. The petition was referred to a Committee of their Lordships, and their opinion was, that the prayer of the petition should not be granted. What would be the consequence of that refusal if it were persisted in? Why, it would be this, that the trial would come on, a verdict would be obtained, and judgment would be pronounced, on a partial view of the case—their Lordships not allowing that evidence to be adduced which was necessary to the substantial justice of the case. Now, when he stated this, he must say he could not see any possible ground of justification for this refusal. After considering all the objections against the production of this evidence—after all he had heard on the subject, he was still of opinion, that there was no validity in such objections; that there was no just reason for coming to such a conclusion. He spoke, however, with the utmost deference and respect to the opinion of those noble Lords who entertained a different view of the subject. Something had been said about their Lordships' privileges. But how could this application affect their privileges? Their Lordships were asked, as a matter of indulgence, and in order that justice should not be thwarted and perverted, to allow one of their officers to be examined. How could a compliance with that request be a breach of their Lordships' privileges? What was the object of their Lordships' privileges? Was it not that justice might be effectually done, and not thwarted and defeated? But, then, another objection was raised, which was founded on the question of privileges. He did not expect, that objection from the quarter whence it had come, for it manifested a great deal of acuteness of mind arrayed against the substantial justice of the case. The judges, in general, opposed themselves to anything that seemed likely to retard and delay justice, and he only asked of their Lordships now merely to forward the justice of the case, and not to assist the defendant unfairly or improperly. While he made these observations he did so with the utmost respect for the noble individual to whom he was about to allude. What, then, was the noble Lord's objection? He said, " The petitioner has violated your Lordships' privileges, and, having done so, he has no right to come here (not for indulgence, he would say, but) for justice." What privilege of their Lordships was violated? One of their standing orders set forth, " That no person shall print, or publish in print, any proceedings of their Lordships' House, or anything relating to such proceedings, without the leave of the House." It was said, that the petitioner had violated their privileges by infringing that order. That was the foundation of the noble Lord's objection, and on that the report of the Committee was founded. Did the petitioner then violate the privileges of the House by copying at large this evidence, which had been sold and circulated notoriously through the country? No, certainly not; because, as he had previously stated, the petitioner had only selected certain passages, in order to make his observations intelligible. This was the whole extent of the violation of the privileges of the House on which the noble Lord's objection rested. If their Lordships did not grant the prayer of the petition, what would be the consequence? Why, the petitioner would be punished by having a verdict against him; because in his own defence, and to make his observations intelligible, he had violated the letter, not the spirit, of the standing order, by printing a few sentences of the evidence. If he had violated their Lordships' privileges, let him be dealt with in the regular way. Let him be called to their Lordships' bar, let him be censured; let him be imprisoned, but for God's sake let them not refuse him justice. How could their Lordships say what amount of punishment an adverse verdict might inflict on the petitioner? How could they tell in what way such a verdict might operate? The true spirit of justice would be, if the petitioner had violated their privileges, which he contended the petitioner had not—he was the assailed, not the assailing party—was to call him to the Bar, and to award him such punishment as appeared to be commensurate with the offence. But let them not interpose to prevent him from obtaining that evidence which was necessary for his just defence. Again, it was said by noble Lords, that it was necessary to protect persons examined before select committees. But had the witness claimed protection? Was there any petition from the witness? No; but this witness was the plaintiff in the action. And for what did the petitioner ask? Why, merely for justice, as between him and that individual. Let then the cause be heard; let the evidence called for be produced; let the jury decide; and let a verdict be given according to that evidence. Was it possible, under all the circumstances, that they could deny the prayer of this petition? Another strange objection was made (which, however, he wished to speak of with respect), the force of which he did not understand then, nor did he understand now; but, as it might operate on the minds of some noble Lords, it was necessary for him to advert to the subject. The Chief Justice, it was said, had decided that an action would lie for printing a petition, or any other document, containing libellous matter on any individual by order of the House of Commons. Then it was argued, that such a case might come home to their Lordships' House. Be it so. But how did that apply to the refusal of the prayer of this petitioner? He stated the argument as he understood it, but he really could not see the force of it, or its application to this case. What did the petitioner ask? He requested their Lordships to allow their officer to appear in court. To do what? To speak to a question of fact. Suppose the question came before their Lordships by a writ of error. They would then have nothing to do with the facts. They could not act on them, they could not consider them, they must decide on the record—on a mere question of law. How, then, could the objection he alluded to have any bearing on the question? The same noble individual, for whose acuteness and ability he entertained the greatest respect, made another objection. "Why," demanded the noble Lord, "are we to evade our privileges? Why should not the judges of the Court of Queen's Bench alter their technical rules of evidence?" Now, if there were anything less technical than another, it was the rules of evidence in our courts of justice. They were founded on long experience, and a philosophical view of the subject, for the purpose of securing the best mode of arriving at the truth. There was nothing whatever technical in those rules. Technical rules of evidence, indeed! The Chief Justice of the Court of Queen's Bench had no power to alter those rules. If he received evidence that ought not to be received, or rejected evidence that ought to be received, a bill of exceptions would be tendered, and the matter would be set right. It was for the Legislature, and not for the Judge, to alter the law of evidence; and if a case came before their Lordships by writ of error, they must decide it according to the law of the land. He knew of no other arguments or objections that were used to induce the Committee to agree to this report, and to come to the conclusion that the prayer of the petition should not be granted. It would be now proper to inquire what were the privileges of the House of Commons, and by what rules they were guided and directed. Their rules were the same as their Lordships. They considered their privileges to be as important as their Lordships considered theirs, and they guarded them as strictly as their Lordships guarded their privileges. Yet he found that a case occurred in 1820 of a description precisely the same as the present. He found this entry on the Journals—" House of Commons, 12th of July, 1820. Ordered, that the shorthand writer who attended the Police Committee in 1817 have leave to attend at the trial of 'Lee v. certain magistrates of the county of Middlesex, with the minutes of evidence given before the said Committee in 1817." So that the House of Commons readily granted an application of this nature. The House of Commons did not consent to the prayer of all such petitions; they also maintained their privileges; but in the case to which he had alluded, the other House of Parliament, feeling it necessary for the ends of justice, allowed the petition of the applicant. It had, however, been said that the present case was different from that which had come before the House of Commons; but in what did that difference consist? It had been said, that the applicant to the House of Commons had not violated the privileges of that House, and that the present applicant had by printing a portion of evidence taken before a Committee of their Lordships' House, been guilty of a breach of privilege. Was that consistent? Was it in accordance with justice or with common sense? The application made to their Lordships was this,—their Lordships were themselves a court; they were judges of the highest court of judicature in the nation; and here was a cause dependent in the court below, and which could not be fairly decided if their Lordships refused the prayer of the petition. Would their Lordships, therefore, sanction an unjust decision? Would they resolve that the sentence of the court below should be given on imperfect evidence? Would they consent to an act of great injustice by withholding their consent to the prayer of the petitioner? He could not believe that their Lordships would be induced to sanction injustice, and therefore, but with all deference, he submitted that the prayer of the petitioner ought to be granted. The noble and learned Lord concluded by making a motion to that effect.

The *Lord Chancellor* said, that having had the honour of being chairman of the committee to which the noble and learned Lord had alluded, he felt himself called upon to address a few observations to their Lordships; and he thought that their Lordships, upon consideration, would be of opinion, that the committee had no option as to their decision on the case before the House. The noble and learned Lord had said, that this was a case of great hardship to the individual applicant; but, although he was most unwilling that any person should suffer hardship, yet in questions of privilege it was not an individual which their Lordships had to consider, for what they had to consider was, whether it was for the interests of the country, and whether it would tend to promote the business of the House, to prevent the publication of any portion of their proceedings. As far as the individual was concerned, he would have been glad to give him every possible facility of proving his case, but the applicant had not set forth the necessity for granting the prayer of his petition, and whether it was necessary that the evidence prayed for should be put upon the record their Lordships had no knowledge. The petitioner stated the facts regarding the report made by the Committee. He said,—

> "That in the last Session of Parliament your Lordships appointed a select committee to inquire into the state of the islands of New Zealand. That the evidence taken before the said committee was, pursuant to your Lordships order, printed, and was communicated to the House of Commons, and was by that hon. House again printed, and has been, and still is, sold at various places in London. That an article was printed and published by your petitioner in "*The Times*" newspaper on the 6th day of November, 1838, on the subject of a company called the New Zealand Associationists, in which the evidence of Joel Samuel Polack and John Downing Tawell, two witnesses who were examined before the said committee, was quoted, and certain comments made thereon."

The petitioner then stated, that an action had been brought against him on account of the publication of a portion of the evidence taken before the New Zealand committee, and that to that action he had pleaded a justification, and that Polack and Tawell did actually give before the committee the evidence on which the action was founded. He said further, that in commenting on the case, the evidence of those two persons was quoted, and he then stated, that he was advised that it was indispensably necessary for the ends of justice that the original examination should be given in, and that it should be produced at the trial. Now, it was said, that the evidence had been taken before a Committee of that House; that it had been communicated to the House of Commons; and that it was then printed and sold at various places. But, it was not stated, that it was sold by the direction of the House of Commons, and that fact ought certainly to have been set forth. The only ground on which the petitioner came forward was, that he had printed evidence taken before a Committee, and having done so, and an action having been brought against him in consequence, and having pleaded a justification, he prayed their Lordships to enable him to prove the evidence taken before the Committee. Now, by one of their Lordships' standing orders, it was declared a breach of privilege to print or publish any portion of the proceedings of the House without leave. But here the party who came for protection had, without leave, printed and published part of their Lordships' proceedings, and he then came before the House, by petition, praying their Lordships to sanction the breach of privilege of which he had been guilty. There might be a question, whether it were proper or not to maintain the standing order to which he had alluded; but if it was no longer to be maintained,. then it ought to be repealed upon general grounds, and not on a particular case like the present. That, however, formed no part of the present question, and what their Lordships had to consider, was, whether a person who stated that he had been guilty of a breach of privilege, ought or ought not to have the protection he prayed for granted. If the application were to be granted, and the prayer of the petition conceded, then their Lordships would have to take into consideration how far concession was to go. Where were they to stop? Such, he believed, was the view of the question taken by the Committee, and it was because they could see no termination to such applications, if the prayer of such a petition were once granted, that they had come to the determination to advise their Lordships not to concede the prayer of the present applicant. The petitioner stated, that the report of the Committee on New Zealand had been communicated to the House of Commons, and that it had again been printed, and his inference was, that the House of Commons had directed its sale. But there was no proof that such was the case; that allegation was not set forth. But even had it been set forth, were their Lordships to say, that because the petitioner stated that somebody had printed the evidence before him, therefore they were to sanction a breach of their standing orders? Were their Lordships to be deprived of their privileges, because the House of Commons had sanctioned the publication of a report which had been communicated by their Lordships? Their Lordships were not called upon to assert their privileges. He should be the last man to assert privilege, except in a case of absolute necessity; but here they were not called upon to assert their privilege. The party making the present application, and who had violated the standing orders of the House, asked their Lordships to overlook his offence, and to enable him to prove the evidence which had been taken before the Committee by attendance of their officer in the court below. But, as the case stood, it was entirely by itself, and there was no precedent for granting such an application, and it was, therefore, for their Lordships to consider whether they were to dispense with the standing order he had quoted; and allow the prayer of the petitioner, who asked for protection for a violation of their privileges.

The Earl of *Shaftesbury* entirely concurred in the opinions expressed by his noble and learned Friend.

Lord *Brougham* was greatly taken by surprise, by the statement of his noble and learned Friend on the Woolsack. He never held a clearer opinion upon any subject of law or of privilege, in or out of Parliament, than that which, upon much consideration of this question he had come to respecting it. He hoped he addressed a favourable audience so far, as they had been described by his noble and learned Friend, that they, being judges and members of the highest court of judicature in this realm, would feel the greatest reluctance to shut out any necessary evidence, which in the administration of justice in the court below, was a desideratum; because if the other House of Parliament was disposed to lean rather against its privileges, than for them, even upon ordinary occasions and where culprits were brought to its bar, charged with an infraction of its privileges, how infinitely more did it become their Lordships' House, the highest Court, to lean against straining its privileges against the interests, and in defeasance of the ends of strict, rigorous, impartial justice. But how infinitely more did it behove that House to administer, not the privileges of the House, if that were the question, but to adopt topics drawn from the existence of, and in regard to, those privileges, with a view thereby to a movement calculated to shut the door of justice. He hoped he addressed those who would bitterly lament to have thus to act, if he showed them, as he should undertake to do, with the most perfect confidence, that with every perfect consistency with their privileges, the prayer of this petition might be granted. The whole of the argument of his noble and learned Friend on the Woolsack was grounded on this, that because this party had fallen into his present difficulty, and was thereby dragged into a court of law, in consequence of violating the privileges of their Lordships' House, he could not come and ask their Lordships to aid him out of the difficulty which that violation had brought him into. In the first place, he would admit, for the sake of the argument this to be true, in point of fact, upon which all this consideration rested, viz. that it was in the course of violating their Lordships' privileges the party got into his present difficulties– that he did what he did in making this communication of the evidence given in the Committee upon the subject of New Zealand, legally; and he would ask, even after admitting that, for the sake of the argument—and he admitted it for the sake of the argument only—whether there was any right or ground whatever—whether there was common consistency, or even decorum, in visiting him in this fashion, admitting he was guilty of a breach of privilege? Did they, during the whole 365 days of the year, attempt to exert their privilege against other persons who were guilty of breaches of it? Were their privileges not in a profound sleep throughout the whole of the year? Were they not in as perennial a suspended animation as any animal or being in the whole of God's creation?—and was this the way to awaken the sleeping lion, and to set him to roar upon this unhappy individual who asked their Lordships for justice. What was it their Lordships did every day and every hour in constant breach of their privileges? There was not a newspaper that was not a breach of their privileges, from the very beginning of it to the last corner in it, where the printer's name was inserted. I dare say (continued the noble and learned Lord) you all read those breaches of privileges with abhorrence. I dare say my noble and learned Friend on the Woolsack, when a newspaper is brought to him, cries out, "Avaunt! Carry it away; I won't have it. What! speak of what passes in the House? Is it possible that I can peruse that? Is it possible that I can give my countenance to that—my sixpence to the encouragement of such an enormous offence? Why I am an accessory after the fact if I do so; therefore away with the monstrous violation of the privileges of my House." That would be consistent with my noble and learned Friend's present notion of the doctrine of the privileges of this House, and I do not know that it is not so, though I have never heard it distinctly stated; but at all events, as my noble and learned Friend treats it, your Lordships are all accessories after the fact. What is more, you benefit by it. You pay for it —you furnish the funds for carrying on the breach. You pay the reporters for coming here to report your proceedings—and you open your galleries and give them convenient accommodation, and furnish them with seats, that they may have the better and more comfortable convenience for committing this foul and astonishing offence, which literally astounds my noble and learned Friend to find that it should ever have been committed. What do I make of that? Why, that it does not quite become us to put our privileges into our pockets, for every day of the year, and just when an individual may be prevented from ruin by allowing those privileges still to slumber, we should start up and say, "Oh dear! it is very true we have privileges, which we quite forgot—let us bring those privileges into exercise, and thus compel the individual to submit to an injury, if not to his total ruin." I don't think that is quite consistent; I don't think that is quite decorous, or quite in conformity with the high sense of justice of Parliament." But there was another thing, the noble Lord continued. He did not say, that any privilege of Parliament could go into disuetude any more than a point of law. But the law admitted of consent or assent; and if their Lordships allowed certain persons to do anything, and to publish all their debates and all their reports of Committees—had not the printer a perfect right to to say, he had their Lordships' consent for printing what he had printed. They had not stirred nor whispered a syllable against the system that had been pursued, therefore he had their Lordships' consent. He came in the third place to deny that this was a breach of privilege, and that a consent was not only tacitly, but expressly given. His noble and learned Friend had read the resolution, that it was a breach to publish this without the consent of the House; and he had now to prove, that it was published with the leave of the House. He had shown, that in one way already, by showing the tacit consent of the House; but he would contend, that here was a tacit answer in the affirmative to a direct application. As his noble and learned Friend read the resolution, he of course meant to read it, that it was a breach to publish it without the leave of the House had and obtained. And he would shew that, that leave had been had and obtained. The House of Commons sent a messenger to their Lordships, and one or the other of his noble Friends must have gone down, in the solemn manner that was known to their Lordships to be consistent with their proceedings, to the bar of the House, and received a message from the Commons, asking leave to have the report of their Committee upon New Zealand; the question must afterwards have been put by one or other of his noble Friends to the House, and there must have been placed, and exist on the journals of the House, an order directing a copy of the report to be sent to the House of Commons. Therefore he would take it that his noble and learned Friend on the Woolsack, or his other noble Friend, was prepared to show him an order appended to that order, saying, "always on condition, that the House of Commons shall not make any use of it, that it shall not print it, that it shall only read it itself, and that it shall not sell it." But here comes the House of Commons, and opened a libel shop—and asked to have their libels retailed at 6*d*. or 1*s*., according to their length; then, their Lordships being in the other House of Parliament, and the proceedings originally emanating from them, they became partners in the libel shop—not sleeping partners, but avowed partners. They knew the order of the House of Commons. They had it before them, and they were aware that they had resolved that their proceedings should be sold; and this was one of their proceedings. Now he wished their Lordships only to look at what was the strict letter of Parliamentary proceedings, and what was the strict letter of the law. His noble Friend who spoke last was an old Member of Parliament; but his noble and learned Friend on the Woolsack, he might say, was only a Member of yesterday, though it might have been better for the country if he had been a Member for a much longer period. His noble and learned Friend opposite (Lord Lyndhurst) had a Parliamentary experience of twenty-three years, and he was sorry to say, himself had an experience of thirty years, and he could assure his noble and learned Friend on the Woolsack, that just as he acquired Parliamentary expeperience, so would he lose his love for privilege, and be inclined to lean not to, but against, privilege. If anything was more odious, more hateful than another, it was the allowing a privilege to lie dormant till it was made a topic in an argument for injustice. Lord Coke had said of privilege, "Omnibus quæsita multis ignorata paucis cognita," but he might in these days say of privilege, "Omnibus invisa, multis infracta, paucis cara." But if privilege was odious in itself, it was still more odious to draw it out as an argument in a case like the present, when they would not venture to make a motion of a substantive character asserting it. Every report brought into the House of Commons was read at the table, and ordered to be published, and it was quite immaterial whether the report came from a Committee of the other House, or was communicated by their Lordships. He did not mean to say, that it was not a breach of privilege to publish the proceedings of the House of Commons. But were their Lordships so fond of the very name of privilege, that, not content with asserting their own rights, they must also stand up for the privileges of the House of Commons? That would be carrying privilege to the very verge of insanity, for it could not be believed that their Lordships would be so touchy on the subject that the moment privilege was mentioned, they would start up and cry, "Oh, it is all one; it is a question of privilege, and whether it relates to the privileges of the House of Commons or of the House of Lords makes no difference." Their Lordships should, moreover, recollect that the House of Commons had sanctioned the publication of their proceedings. Mr. Lawson had bought the report at the Commons' shop, the money had gone into the Commons' purse, and the Commons had thereby given him leave to make what use he pleased of what he had bought. He therefore maintained, that the argument failed not only in point of fact, but in point of law, and that no breach of privilege had been committed either against the House of Lords or the House of Commons. He had but little more to say, but he must really beg their Lordships to bear with him for one moment, although he had to apologize to their Lordships, and particularly to his noble and learned Friend, for thus taking up their time, knowing as he did that his noble and learned Friend had quite exhausted the arguments upon this question. If their Lordships meant to maintain their privileges, let them be manly enough to assert them; let them call for the printer to their bar; let them make him an example to all future offenders. Let them mete out to him the punishment apportioned for the offence, if their Lordships knew what the punishment was. But how could they mete out that punishment there? The punishment depended in this case upon the verdict of a jury, which might give 40*s.* damages, or 1,500*l.* The punishment, then, would not be inflicted by their Lordships, although they would be the moving cause of its infliction, and the defendant would be punished, not because he had committed a breach of privilege, but because another individual had been civilly injured, while in punishing the defendant they would reward another man who had nothing to do with the matter. With respect to another argument, and it was the last to which he should advert, which had been used by his noble and learned Friend (the Lord Chancellor), he was not a little astonished to hear him say, that the defendant might have gone to trial without putting this plea upon the record, and that he did not see the absolute necessity of a justification. If his noble and learned Friend had ever studied the science of special pleading, he must have entirely forgotten what he had learned. Every one who knew anything about pleading was aware, that in a civil action, when the publication could not be denied the only defence was, that the alleged libellous matter was true, and that must be set out in a special plea, which could only be proved by producing the evidence for which the defendant now called. His noble and learned Friend, said, that the defendant might have gone to trial upon the general issue alone. But the defendant had the assistance of a counsel extremely learned and astute, a great champion of privilege, one who was not likely to plead a justification, if the general issue would have sufficed, and who had not only advised upon the case, but had settled the pleas; he alluded to his hon. and learned Friend, the Attorney-General. But his noble and learned Friend (the Lord Chancellor) seemed to think, that it would have been sufficient for the defendant to deny, that he was actuated by any malicious intention or motive. But the defendant could not have pleaded that, for it would have been struck out upon special demurrer, since the law of England said, although he could not concur in its policy, that if a man were charged with publishing a libel, the malicious intention was absolutely and entirely immaterial, and if the publication were dictated by the blackest motives, in order to gratify the most infernal spite which raged in the bosom of man or fiend, yet, if the words were true, the intention was utterly immaterial. That was the rule of the law, and consequently no man could allege on the record, that he was not actuated by malicious motives. He should now sit down with the most perfect satisfaction, that their Lordships could not refuse their assent to this motion. But he would first refer to two cases, "the King v. Creevy," and "the King v. Abingdon," in which it was agreed, that a breach of privilege was committed if speeches made in either House of Parliament were published, unless leave was given by either House. In the case of "the King v. Creevy," which was tried at the Lancaster summer assizes in 1813, before Mr. Justice Le Blanc, Mr. Creevy had made a speech in Parliament reflecting upon an individual, and he had afterwards published that speech. The party assailed, considering that it was necessary to clear his character, preferred a bill of indictment against Mr. Creevy, which was afterwards removed by *certiorari* to the court of King's Bench. There were, of course, two questions to be submitted to the jury, and one of them was, whether Mr. Creevy ever made the speech in Parliament at all, or whether he had not invented the speech and published it afterwards. Now, if their Lordships refused Mr. Lawson the privilege which he sought, it would go to the jury, that he had fabricated the report, and that no such evidence had been given before a Committee of that House. But in the case of "the King v. Creevy," in which he had been counsel, he tendered a witness, a Member of the House of Commons, to commit a breach of privilege, according to the argument now used, by saying what passed in the House of Commons on the occasion when the speech was made, and no objection was raised to that course by Mr. Justice Le Blanc, or the Attorney-General for the county palatine of Lancaster, the late Mr. Justice Park. He, however, was ultimately obliged to make an application to postpone the trial for a week because of the sudden death of the sister of the Member whom he had called as a witness. The Court, however, called on the Attorney-General to avoid the delay by admitting, that the printed speech was the same as that delivered in the House of Commons. This was all that was wanted here; but if their Lordships refused this application, not one of them could publish his speech, or even go to a public meeting and say, that he had heard another of their Lordships say so and so, but it must go to the jury that the speech was fabricated, because he would be guilty of a breach of privilege. If this doctrine of privilege was pressed to such an extent as some would press it, the consequences would be most serious. The noble Earl (Roden) was about to bring forward the subject of the Irish alleged misgovernment, and in so doing would state a great many things, reflecting not merely on those connected with the Government, but on magistrates, and on private individuals. Whoever published the speech of the noble Earl would be liable to an indictment, or to an action; and as he would not be allowed—according to this doctrine of privilege—to prove the delivery of the speech—it would go to the jury, that he had fabricated the speech, and the penalty would be proportionably greater. Better (continued the noble and learned Lord) better at once say, there shall be no reporting of our proceedings, than to open your doors and invite parties to publish your proceedings, and at the same time tell those who do so, that they must beware—that they incur the risk of punishment—like the Empress Catherine, who after she had murdered her husband, ordered his body to be exhibited, that the public might see there were no marks of violence, but whomsoever approached near enough to see, bayonets were pointed at their breasts. My Lords, if you refuse this motion it will go forth to the world, that you are guilty of the hypocrisy of saying to the world, "people may publish our proceedings—but we are so far from being sincere, that whosoever avails himself of our permission, will be liable to be punished in a criminal proceeding, and to be ruined, perhaps, by damages, in a civil one." My Lords, I have spoken at greater length, and with more ardour, than in my present state of suffering I ought to have done; but my heart is in this cause, and so long as I am in this House injustice shall never, without protest, be committed.

Lord *Holland* should be the last man in that House to oppose the motion of the noble and learned Lord, if it were not necessary to defend the rights and privileges of that House. He was aware of the odds which he was encountering when he opposed himself to the two noble and learned Lords on a question which, according to their view of the case, involved points of law. But he did not consider that the question was one in which points of law were involved, and still less was it a question of exerting their Lordships' privileges. To hear what his noble and learned Friend who had just sat down had said, it would be supposed, that those who had formed the Committee were recommending to that House some stern, inflexible, and unjust exertion of their privileges. But this he denied, and so far from exerting their privileges were they, that the petition called on them to wave their privileges, because the defendant had departed from the rules of the House, asking their Lordships to grant him peculiar advantages, and asking that favour on the ground that he had done what their Lordships had forbidden to be done. This was what he considered to be the nature of the petition made to their Lordships. There was, he apprehended, no substantial injustice in the refusal, because the evidence did not appear to him to be at all necessary, further than to prove an averment in the plea which the petitioner had pleaded, so far as he was informed, somewhat unnecessarily. Let their Lordships, however, look at the proceedings in this case, which had been very fairly stated by the noble and learned Lord who first introduced this subject. In a committee of their Lordships a question was put to a witness, whether he would believe another man on his oath. The witness was at first reluctant to answer, but being told that he must give an answer to the question, he replied, that he would not believe him upon his oath. The next stage in the proceedings was this—the report was laid before, and at the request of, the House of Commons, was communicated to the other House of Parliament. It then became the property of the House of Commons, and according to the usages, or at least the late usages, of that House, persons were authorized to sell copies of that report. It was contended, that this circumstance of authorizing the sale by the House of Commons altered their Lordships' privileges. But he could not see, that their privileges were to depend upon the conduct of the House of Commons. He could not imagine how the conduct of the House of Commons could alter either the rights or the privileges of that House. He agreed with his noble and learned Friend who had described so eloquently, as he always did describe, the character of privilege. He agreed also with him, that there was an absurdity in enforcing their privileges in the way in which his noble and learned Friend supposed they must be enforced, but if they granted the application made in this instance, they must do so in all others, and not only in all similar cases, but even those which were at all alike. If he could have any doubt on the subject, the speech of his noble and learned Friend would have removed it, for the noble and learned Lord contended, that if an action of libel should be brought against a person in consequence of having made a speech delivered by a Peer in his place in Parliament, such person would be justified in calling on the House to allow him to give evidence through the testimony of the Peer who delivered the particular speech of what had passed in debate in their Lordships' House. According to this doctrine, the noble Earl to whom the noble and learned Lord had alluded (the Earl of Roden), might hereafter be required to give testimony in a court of justice as to the speech which it was his intention shortly to make in that House, or if the noble Earl were not summoned, he supposed, that as the best possible evidence must be obtained, the clerks at the table would be called upon to attend. The consequences of such a course of proceeding he could not, though the noble and learned Lord might, contemplate without apprehension. He contended, notwithstanding the rebuke he had received from the noble and learned Lord, that it was not the mere orders of the House, but an Act of Parliament, which prevented their Lordships from acceding to the motion before them. The Bill of Rights declared, that no speech in debate or proceeding of Parliament should be impeached or questioned in any court or place out of Parliament. He knew he should be told, that he did not understand legal phraseology, but he thought he understood the English language, and certainly if evidence given in one of their Lordships' committees was not a proceeding in Parliament, he did not know what was, and at the same time he conceived, that the summoning a witness to prove upon a trial what had been stated in a committee, was questioning a proceeding in Parliament in a court of justice. His noble and learned Friend had quoted two cases, viz. the case of Lord Abingdon, and that of Mr. Creevy, but neither of them applied perfectly to the point. In the latter case, the evidence as to what occurred in Parliament was admitt d evidence, and in the former, the action, he believed, was a civil action. [Lord *Brougham* observed that it was not.] He recollected that Lord Abingdon was imprisoned for three months, the prosecutor being a man of the name of Surman; and frequently afterwards Lord Abingdon, when making a speech, used to conclude by observing, "But I won't go on preaching, for I have had enough of sermons." He was told, that in this case a civil action was not brought, but it certainly might have been, and had Lord Abingdon justified himself by saying, that he spoke the words complained of in their Lordships' House, would the House have furnished the means of proving, that such words had been spoken of in debate? If their Lordships admitted the motion in the present instance, it would be utterly impossible for them to refuse a similar application in the case of an action brought in consequence of a published report of any one of their Lordships' speeches God forbid that he should ask their Lordships to exert their privilege for the purpose of preventing the publication of the usual reports of their proceedings. He had had a longer Parliamentary experience than even his noble and learned Friend; for he had now been forty years a member of their Lordships' House, and he had ever been an enemy to a stern and vindictive exercise of the privileges of the House. But there was a great difference between exerting their privileges for the purpose of preventing what was a venial, and in some instances a praiseworthy breach of them (he alluded to the publication of their proceedings), and not encouraging such breaches of privilege, by a departure from all the rules and precedents of the House, and the positive injunctions of an Act of Parliament. He would be willing to allow, that in a case where life, or limb, or property, was greatly concerned, and where a clear case of necessity for the evidence asked for was made out, the application might then be deserving of their Lordships' consideration; but with all due deference for the noble and learned Lords who had preceded him, he did not think, that such a case of necessity had in the present instance been proved. The petitioner would, of course, be required to give the best possible evidence in a court of justice; but if he proved, that he was impeded by the privilege of Parliament from obtaining the evidence he now asked for, surely it would be enough for him to show, under such circumstances, that the libel was extracted from a publication under the authority of the House of Commons. As he had before stated, he dreaded the consequences to which compliance with the present application must necessarily lead. But this was not all. There was another subject, the connexion of which with the present question, though the noble and learned Lords did not, he saw plainly enough. It was a matter of notoriety, that in a matter of libel a question was now pending between the other House of Parliament and a court of law, respecting privilege, on which it was their Lordships' first duty carefully to abstain from expressing or implying the slightestopinion. When he heard the noble and learned Lord, who endeavoured to persuade their Lordships to depart from their usual rules and orders, dwelling so much on the fact, that the House of Commons had authorised the publication of a portion of their proceedings, he could not help thinking, that their Lordships, by complying with the motion, would be furnishing a pregnant argument on the nature and propriety of that measure. Would it not be safer, then, for their Lordships to adhere to their rules, and leave that question to be decided by a court of law, rather than imply an opinion on a point with respect to which they might ultimately have to pronounce a judicial sentence? God forbid that the matter should be pushed to such an extremity. He should consider it a great calamity if it was. But where there was a possibility of such an event, it became their Lordships to take no step that might imply either approbation or disapprobation of the proceeding of the House of Commons.

Lord *Ellenborough* was a Member of the Committee which had framed the report laid on their Lordships' Table by the noble and learned Lord on the Woolsack. He certainly thought, that the Committee could not have done otherwise than advise the House not to overlook its privileges, and after all that had been stated by the two noble and learned Lords in favour of the motion before the House, he still remained of the opinion expressed in the report. It would be presumptuous in him to repeat the arguments used by the noble and learned Lord on the Woolsack, and by the noble Lord opposite, but he could not avoid expressing his apprehension of the precedent which it was proposed by the motion to establish. The noble and learned Lord opposite had said, that the House of Commons had opened a libel shop, and it was because he was not disposed to make the House of Lords a partner in the concern, that he should oppose the motion. There was great benefit in the publication of the proceedings of both Houses of Parliament, and no one would endeavour to exert dormant privileges in order to restrict that publication; but what their Lordships were now asked to do was, not to overlook that species of publication he had just alluded to, but to give facilities for the publication of that which was libellous. To an application of this kind he could not assent.

Their Lordships divided: Contents 31; Not Contents 18:—Majority 13.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Monday, March 11, 1839.

Minutes.] Petitions presented. By Messrs. Pakington, Handley, Wodehouse, Byng, O. Gore, Halford, Bayley, Jones, Harcourt, Round, Chute, J. R. O. Gore, Mackenzie, Palmer, Miles, Bethell, S. O'Brien, Lords G. Somerset, Ingestrie, Mahon, Worsley, Stanley, Eliot, and C. Manners, Sirs G. H. Smith, E. Knatchbull, R. Peel, T. Acland, and Colonel Sibthorp, against the Repeal of the Corn-laws.—By Messrs. R Steuart, Bowes, Langdale, and Hume, Sirs G. Strickland, and T. C. Style, for the Repeal of the Corn-laws.—By Sir R. Peel, from several places, against the Railways (Ireland) Bill; and from the Orkneys, for Church Extension in Scotland.—By Sir G. Clerke, from several places, to the same effect.—By Mr. W. Smith O'Brien, in favour of the Railways (Ireland) Bill.—By Mr. W. Roche, from Limerick, in favour of the Irish Municipal Corporations Bill.—By Mr. Pemberton, from the Dean and Chapter of Ripon, against any system of National Education not founded on the Scriptures.—By Mr. Mackenzie, from the county of Ross, for a Uniform rate of Postage.—By Mr. Byng, from one place, and Mr. Du Pré, from Buckinghamshire, against the Beer Laws.—By Mr. Praed, from some place, against Maynooth College.—By Mr. Plumtre, from one place, against the Municipal Corporations Bill.—By Mr. Dennistoun, from Glasgow, against any Grant to the Church of Scotland; and against the Union of Church and State.

Westminister Theatres—Performances in Lent.] On the order of the day being read for going into a Committee of Supply,

Mr. *T. Duncombe* rose to move as an amendment in pursuance of the notice he had given, the following resolution:

"That this House having on a former day agreed to the following resolution, viz.—That it is the opinion of this House, that during Lent no greater restrictions should be placed upon Theatrical Entertainments within the city of Westminster, than are placed upon the like amusements at the same period in every other part of the metropolis. That this House learns with regret and surprise, that her Majesty's Ministers have thought fit to interfere with the wholly unfettered discretion which the Legislature has been pleased to vest in the Lord Chamberlain with respect to theatrical entertainments within the city of Westminster, by directing that officer of her Majesty's household so to exercise his discretionary authority as to defeat the manifest object of a resolution of the Commons House of Parliament."

He wished particularly to call the attention of the House to the conduct of Ministers with regard to the vote come to on a former evening on this subject, and he thought he should be able to show, to the satisfaction of the House, that not only had that vote been entirely disregarded by her Majesty's Ministers, but they had acted, with respect to it, in a manner wholly unprecedented, and so as to defeat the express object of the vote. If, on the occasion to which he alluded, he had been defeated in his motion,—if the majority had been against him, and said that the city of Westminster ought to be placed on a different footing from any other part of the kingdom as regards theatrical entertainments, he should have humbly bowed to the decision. But the contrary was the fact—the battle had been fairly fought and fairly won, and those who supported him on that occasion had a right—the people of Westminster had a right—to expect some results and to derive some benefit from that victory. What was then the result? He had been accused of attempting to establish that a resolution of the House of Commons was paramount to the law of the land. He was not such an idiot as to maintain any such proposition. What he maintained was, only what had been laid down by a competent authority, that the Commons' House of Parliament was established, not to be a control upon the people, but to be a control for the people upon the executive. If the Lord Chamberlain had acted upon his own authority in interfering in a manner contrary to the vote which had been come to, he might have pleaded ignorance of that vote. Her Majesty's Ministers had no such excuse to plead, and it was they who had interfered, and, as he contended, in a most unconstitutional manner, to oppose the resolution of the House of Commons. That was proved by the letter which had been sent to the lessee of Drury-lane Theatre, from the Lord Chamberlain's-office, and which stated, that her Majesty's Ministers had directed that no other than the usual performance of oratorios should take place on the Wednesdays and Fridays in Lent. What had Ministers to do with the officers of her Majesty's household? He maintained that their conduct had been most disrespectful to the House of Commons, and was an infringement of the perogative of the Crown, besides being most injurious and oppressive to those whose means of subsistence were at the mercy of the Lord Chamberlain. By the statute of the 10th of George 2nd. this jurisdiction was for the first time vested in the Lord Chamberlain; previously to that period it was confided to an officer called the Abbot of Misrule. It had been probably found that that officer abused the discretionary power intrusted to him, and it was consequently transferred to the Lord Chamberlain by the act of Parliament in question, but that act only required that every play and interlude should be submitted to the examiner fourteen days before it was acted, and that it should be lawful for the Lord Chamberlain from time to time, as and when it should seem fit to him, to prohibit the performance of any play or interlude for gain or reward. No particular days were mentioned in the act; the Lord Chamberlain had as much right to prohibit plays on Tuesdays and Saturdays, as on Wednesdays and Fridays; it was a matter entirely in his discretion. For his own part, he believed that it was not the Lord Chamberlain who had interfered with these performances; it was altogether wrong to place the blame of this proceeding either on the shoulders of the Lord Chamberlain or of the Bishop of London. The blame rested with those who had sought on this occasion to exert a new and most unconstitutional power—the blame rested upon her Majesty's Ministers, who had just as much right to interfere with the jurisdiction of the Lord Chamberlain as with that of the Lord Chancellor, the Lord Chief Justice of the Queen's Bench, or the Archbishop of Canterbury; and the House ought to say to these Ministers, "We will not suffer you to usurp the prerogative of the Crown, as you are attempting to do." It might have been expected that an administration calling itself liberal would have paid some attention to the decision of those upon whose support they usually relied. He would give a precedent of recent date, which showed the weight which ought to be given to the resolution of the House on this subject. What was done last year, after the resolution to which the House had come, upon the motion of an hon. Baronet on the other side of the House upon the subject of negro emancipation? What did the Under Secretary for the colonies say in asking the House to rescind the vote to which it had come? Then, too, let the House recollect, the majority had been only three, the numbers being ninety-eight and ninety-five, whereas upon his (Mr. Duncombe's) motion, the numbers were ninety-four and seventy-four—a majority, give him leave to say, very much greater than her Majesty's Ministers were on all occasions able to command. Upon the occasion to which he alluded, the hon. Baronet who had moved the resolution said he would leave his resolution in the hands of her Majesty's Ministers. He had done the same; he had asked the noble Lord, the Secretary for the Home Department to take the matter into his consideration, and offered, if he would promise to take any steps to remove the evil complained of, to leave the matter in his hands. His offer, however, had been treated with perfect contempt. The Ministers told him he might bring on his motion in whatever form he pleased, and they would always oppose it. Upon the occasion of the motion of last year, to which he had referred, the Under Secretary for the colonies said, if it had been a question relating to the domestic concerns of the country he should not have thought it necessary to recommend the House to reconsider its resolution. Was not the present a question relating to the domestic concerns of the country? He was not going on this occasion to re-open the general question with respect to the observance of Lent, and the absurdity of the custom of which he complained; all that he had done before, and had also shown how Lent was observed in her Majesty's Palace; how it was observed by her Majesty's Ministers, and by the bishops; and he had only asked that the people of Westminster might be at liberty to observe Lent in an equally agreeable way. But if he had known what was going on at the time that he was addressing the House on the occasion, he might have added to his list an entertainment given in Sussex by a noble Duke, for whom no one felt a greater esteem and personal respect than himself. That noble Duke had entertained 700 or 800 guests on a Wednesday in Lent, and amongst the assembly there were fifty-nine clergymen, who assisted in the observance of Lent in Sussex. He would ask the noble Secretary for the Home Department, if he had consulted the Bishop of London about this? That right rev. Prelate, who thought it right to deprive the people of Westminster of their amusements, would probably think it also right to deprive these fifty-nine clergymen of their gowns. He, however, thought that those rev. Gentlemen deserved no such persecution; they were, in his opinion, doing nothing but what was worthy of their station and of the occasion which had called that assemblage together. Far be it from him to make any ill-natured reflections upon the subject; he joined in the acclamations of that assemblage, and in their wishes for the welfare and happiness of their noble host. But it must not be forgotten that they had met together on a Wednesday in Lent. He really thought that this ought not to have been made a question of religion. The Church ought to be too firm to depend upon the persecution of a few poor players. He cared not how many supported his motion, or whether he was in a majority or minority, being satisfied that, whatever became of his resolution, he had done his best to maintain the honour and independence of the Commons' House of Parliament. The hon. Member concluded by moving the resolution.

Lord *John Russell* begged to make a short statement to the House of what had occurred on this subject, and he would then leave it to the House to decide as it thought proper. It was perfectly true that the hon. Member for Finsbury at the beginning of the Session had asked whether it was the intention of her Majesty's Ministers, or of the Lord Chamberlain, to take off any of the restrictions which had hitherto been observed on Wednesdays and Fridays in Lent relating to theatrical entertainments, and that an answer was given that there was no such intention. That answer certainly implied that her Majesty's Ministers had not thought proper to advise her Majesty that those restrictions which had been placed, as it was said, from time immemorial upon theatrical entertainments during Lent should be taken off; and, after reflecting on the decision which he had then come to, he had no reason for supposing that they had judged ill in not giving her Majesty such advice. He was sure, on the contrary, that if, without any cause or general wish expressed, the custom which had hitherto been observed, and the restriction which had hitherto been imposed during Lent, had been relaxed by her present Majesty, many persons would have been shocked, and many others even of those who the other evening voted for the resolution of the hon. Gentleman, the Member for Finsbury, would have declared that the present Ministers of the Crown, who had given such advice to her Majesty, had less respect and less regard for the established observances during Lent than had former Sovereigns and former Ministers in this country. He had never said, nor, indeed, had many other Members who the other evening voted the same way as the right hon. Baronet, the Member for Pembroke, said, that these restrictions were thought necessary as a religious question, but as a question of respect for established usage; and he was sure that if her Majesty's Ministers had proposed to remove these restrictions, such a proposal would have been considered as wholly uncalled for and unnecessary, and that it was done on purpose to disregard what had hitherto been established. He had no hesitation, therefore, in saying that he did not repent the course he had taken in answering the hon. Gentleman's first question. The hon. Gentleman then presented a petition to the House, and immediately moved upon it an address to the Crown, and on a division there were 161 Members against the motion, and 72 for it. The hon. Gentleman next brought forward his proposition in another shape—in a resolution of somewhat equivocal meaning recited in the resolution then before the House. That resolution was carried by a majority of 92 for the motion to 72 against it; so that on the first motion there were 161 against, to 72 for; and on the other motion there were 72 against, to 92 for—in short, that of the whole number of Members who had voted, a much larger number had voted against the motion on the whole, than had voted for it. On both divisions, although probably many persons were the same in each, only 164 Members had in any way supported the resolutions, whilst on the very first division 161 had voted against it, and if they took the two divisions, no less than 233 Members had recorded their votes against the alteration. Therefore, when the resolution was carried, he certainly saw no reason to presume that it embodied the deliberate opinion of the House of Commons. The hon. Gentleman had referred to the question moved last year relating to the negro apprenticeship. The first motion was made by the hon. Member for Yorkshire (Sir George Strickland), and the House decided against it. Then the House gave a favourable opinion in a division on a motion brought forward by the hon. Baronet, the Member for Warwickshire. But even that was not considered decisive, and then a subsequent majority of that House was in favour of the first determination. And he had certainly expected, that in the present proceeding, the hon. Gentleman would have asked the opinion of the House as to what was to be done with respect to his resolution. But he had no objection, for the information of the hon. Gentleman and of the House, to state what he had done upon the present occasion. The hon. Gentleman, the Member for Finsbury, thought, that he had unduly and improperly interfered with the decision of the Lord Chamberlain. Now, two or three years ago the Lord Chamberlain, on some question which then occupied his attention, told his late Majesty that he would like to consult the Secretary of State for the Home Department; his Majesty consented, and he was consulted about, as he believed, an application from a gentleman named Rainer, who wished to open a theatre in Westminster, and whose application was supported by the hon. Gentleman, the Member for Finsbury. [Mr. *T. Duncombe* remarked, that the application had nothing to do with Lent.] Another question arose as to the time the theatres should be open, and the Lord Chamberlain had come to him, and had said he would be glad of the advice of the Secretary of State for the Home Department before he decided; and he thought that the Lord Chamberlain was justified in making the reference, and that when called upon, he was bound to give his opinion. Therefore, as to her Majesty's Ministers interfering with the prerogative of the Crown, or with the discretion of the Lord Chamberlain, it was an entirely chimerical apprehension on the part of the hon. Gentleman, because from time to time the Lord Chamberlain had asked the opinion of the Secretary of State, and by his advice he had acted, and he must say, that upon questions which affected the good order and the police of the city of Westminster, it could hardly be said to be so unconstitutional in practice as the hon. Gentleman implied. So when the late resolution had been come to, the Lord Chamberlain had again applied to him for direction and advice, but, as the question had come before the House, he did not like to give his own advice solely upon a question on which the House had passed a resolution, and he had, therefore, consulted his colleagues. They were of opinion, that this resolution of the House of Commons, after the adverse decision the other way, was not such a resolution as would justify the Lord Chamberlain in advising the Crown, or on his own authority immediately to act upon it, or to do any thing till the question was further considered. Then Mr. Bunn told them that, on a mere resolution of that House, he had incurred considerable expense. Why, the House had come to a resolution that negro apprenticeship should cease on the 1st of August, but what would have been thought of a person at Demerara who should have said, "The House of Commons has passed a resolution on which I have commenced acting. I will disregard the prerogative of the Crown, I will set aside the statute law of the realm, and I will proceed on a resolution of the House of Commons?" With every respect, therefore, for the resolutions of that House, he little thought, that they could supersede the law of the realm or dispense with the prerogative of the Crown. When, therefore, the lessee of Drury-lane advertised a performance on a Wednesday and Friday in Lent, the Lord Chamberlain, with the sanction and the concurrence of her Majesty's Ministers, did inform the lessee of Drury-lane, that these performances could not be sanctioned by the Lord Chamberlain, and he conceived, that the Lord Chamberlain was perfectly justified, and that her Majesty's Ministers were perfectly justified, in their interference. He thought, that if they had acted otherwise, if they had said, that a resolution of the House of Commons had been altogether sufficient, they would not only have acted wrong in this trifling case, but they would make a precedent which would be very injurious to the proceedings of Parliament and to the prerogative of the Crown. Mr. Bunn seemed to treat with contempt the prerogative of the Crown, and had no respect for her Majesty's Ministers, but another person connected with the patent theatres, Mr. Macready, had paid that respect, for having seen the account of the resolution of the House, he submitted to the decision of the Lord Chamberlain, and said that he would be glad to know what course it was intended to pursue; and the Lord Chamberlain informed Mr. Macready, that, in the present proceedings, there would be no alteration, but that the whole question of the theatres was under consideration, and that it would be decided upon before the ensuing season. He would, therefore, state to the House, the general intentions of the Government with respect to this question. The hon. Gentleman, the Member for Finsbury, had induced the House to declare,

> "That it is the opinion of this House, that during Lent, no greater restriction should be placed upon the theatrical entertainments within the city of Westminster than are placed upon the like amusements, at the same period, in every other part of the metropolis."

He had on a former occasion explained the position in which the theatres in the other parts of the metropolis were, but he would repeat, that so long as they performed the regular drama, they acted without any authority, and, in fact, their performances were altogether illegal. It had been shown, by a decision in the Court of Queen's Bench, that if an actor tried to recover his salary, and the manager endeavoured to make him perform his contract, he had no power to do so, because the magistrates were prohibited from allowing theatres to be opened within twenty miles of the city of Westminster, and therefore their performances on Wednesdays and Fridays, as well as those on Mondays and Tuesdays and Thursdays and Saturdays, were unauthorised. This was a position in which he did not think the question should continue, and he did not think that he who lived in any other part of the metropolis should have theatres any more than those who resided within the city of Westminster, but at the same time he was of opinion that good theatrical entertainments were as good and wholesome amusements as could be provided for the people, and that they ought generally to be promoted. Upon this belief, therefore, the Government had determined that they would either introduce a bill, or that in some of the police bills now before the House, they would propose a provision that those magistrates who now had the power of giving licences for music and dancing in some parts of the metropolis should also have the power of granting licences for theatrical entertainments. He would not decide that this power should be given to the magistrates particularly, for that was a matter which would hereafter be considered, but he declared his belief that the power of procuring good and respectable theatrical entertainments should extend throughout the metropolis. The question, then, was whether the restriction upon the performances on Wednesdays and Fridays during Lent should be observed, and he begged to say that he thought it would have been most unwise and indecent on the part of the Ministers if they had proposed a motion which should have had the effect of changing the system. But when this came to be the question in dispute they must look at what was the general mode of observing Lent in the metropolis and in the country generally; and it must be admitted that, whether they looked to what took place in London, or to what took place in Sussex, which had been referred to by the hon. Gentleman, they saw that persons of the most serious views with regard to the observance of religion, and that a great portion of the clergy themselves, no longer observed Lent in the same manner in which it appeared to have been observed in the early times of the Reformation. They saw, then, that the custom in this respect was changed, and as it was observed that the clergy had not objected to give dinners and to go to balls during the period in question, it was not inexpedient to make a change or to cease to keep up the restriction which now existed. They were not, indeed, disposed to make any change during the present season. The Lord Chamberlain had made his order with regard to Drury-lane Theatre, and if it were disobeyed he would put his authority in force; but, by making a change in the law hereafter, they would remove the existing restriction. The hon. Member had made this matter the subject of a motion for a vote of censure on her Majesty's Ministers, for their course of proceeding on this matter, but he might have taken one of two courses in preference to bringing it forward in this shape—he might have moved upon the last resolution, proposing an address to the Crown, which would have brought the matter under the attention of the Crown, and would have necessarily procured an answer, or the hon. Member might have proceeded upon the resolution, and introduced a bill to the House to change the practice. These were the obvious courses for the hon. Member to adopt, but he had not chosen to take either, and had rather preferred snapping at the proceedings, in order to give him the means of censuring the conduct of her Majesty's Ministers. Now, he certainly did not object to the hon. Member attacking the ministers, but he thought that he had better reserve his censure for a matter of greater importance than this. He did not think that the subject was one of very great importance, the question being the salaries of the performers and the amusement of the public on one side, and the decent performance and observance of Lent on the other.

Mr. *Leader* said, that in the first place the answer of the noble Lord had been as unfair to his hon. Friend—he could prove it—it had been as unfair to his hon. Friend, as his conduct had been injurious to the theatrical performers of Westminster. It would seem that the noble Lord would wish the public to suppose that this observance was to be regarded as some sort of religious ceremony, not only in a particular part of the metropolis, but all over the country; while it was perfectly notorious that it was an observance which was only kept in Westminster, to the material injury of persons connected with the theatres in that part of the metropolis. If it were a religious observance, it should be kept up every where. Those persons who, as the noble Lord said, would be shocked at its removal, must be persons having that sort of conscience which was described by an hon. Member opposite some nights ago as a sort of India-rubber conscience, unless they were likewise shocked at the performances which took place in the parish of Lambeth, and all over the country. The noble Lord's comparison of the divisions on this subject was also most unfair. Hon. Members were surely aware that the opposition against his hon. Friend arose, in the first instance, from his having infringed a point of form in bringing forward his motion at an improper time, when it interfered with the presenting of petitions. Therefore, and not on account of the motion itself, had so many hon. Members voted against his hon. Friend. In the course which his hon. Friend now pursued, he thought that he was perfectly right, and that he could have pursued none other; for her Majesty's Ministers had thought proper to treat the resolution of that House with utter contempt, in acting and causing the Lord Chamberlain to act in direct opposition to it. The noble Lord treated it as a trifling matter, but it was no trifling matter to the theatrical performers, who lost one-third of their earnings in consequence of the observance being continued. The altered tone of the noble Lord, however, though it did not say much for his consistency, gratified him much, because the persons who were injured would gain by that inconsistency. The noble Lord had talked much the other night of the Established Church, and the Bishop of London, and of the great discouragement religious observances would meet with if the proposal of his hon. Friend were adopted. The noble Lord had now, however, given the House to understand, that as Wednesdays and Fridays in Lent were not particularly well observed, it was the intention of the Government to introduce a bill in order to sanction theatrical performances everywhere, and at all seasons. Although the performers of the theatres of Westminster might suffer this season, it was at least a gratification to think, that next year those absurd regulations respecting Lent would be totally abolished.

Mr. *Warburton* thought, that as the noble Lord had shown so strong a feeling of conciliation, those who supported the motion of his hon. Friend would be showing a very bad spirit if they did not meet the noble Lord with the same feeling.

Sir *R. Inglis* said, that notwithstanding the concession made by the noble Lord opposite to the hon. Member for Finsbury, he did hope that those who, on a former night, concurred with the noble Lord, would have, on the present occasion, an opportunity of giving a similar vote. He hoped that those who voted with him would not be guilty of the gross injustice and inconsistency of pronouncing a censure upon the conduct of Government for pursuing that which they, with the Government, held to be the right line. The question was not whether they acted up to their principles. [The hon. Baronet was interrupted by "*Hear, hear.*"] The only thing which made him suspect himself of being in the wrong, was the circumstance of his receiving the cheers of assent, from the two hon. Gentlemen opposite, the Members for Dublin and Kilkenny. He repeated, that the question was not whether they acted up to their principles, but whether those principles were sound. And the proof that we were all hypocrites or bigots, individually, would not decide that point. The players had this in common with the Ministers, that both classes were called "her Majesty's servants;" hence the former were placed under the direction of the Lord Chamberlain, and probably had larger salaries; they could, therefore, the better bear the loss of not being fully employed. At any rate, they knew the contract on which they served, they had more distinction in their profession: and that distinction was, perhaps, considered by them as a compensation for not receiving some ten or twelve days pay in the course of the year, which might be earned by their brethren elsewhere. On the present occasion he did not mean to trouble them with many remarks as to the question whether Westminster, as such, ought to continue to be subjected to regulations from which Lambeth was free; or whether, on the other hand, those regulations ought to be extended to Lambeth; but, on behalf of the nation, he wished to take the liberty of inquiring if the public time were to be devoted to questions of this nature, and other subjects, as he conceived, equally unimportant? What would any foreigner, or any Englishman, think on reading their debates, if he saw that they were one evening spending their time in a discussion about two pounds of candles; on another whether two theatres in the city of Westminster were to be opened or closed on two days of the week? In the mean time, what became of the great interests of England? He did not hesitate to say, that they disgraced themselves by wasting so much time upon such inquiries. It had been alleged, that the mode of observing Lent contended for by those who agreed with him, was a mere relic of barbarism which ought to be abolished; but was it forgotten, that this was a barbarous usage for which a great proportion of Europe and a great proportion of the people of England entertained no trifling respect? And it was therefore with regret that he heard the latter part of the speech of the noble Lord opposite, widely different as it was from the sentiments expressed by him in his speech on the former night, and even in the earlier part of his speech on the present occasion.

Mr. *O'Connell* said, that the hon. Baronet took up the time of the House by endeavouring to show that the subject was one which ought not to occupy its attention. For his own part, however, he thought that the time of the House was never thrown away when it was employed in redressing the grievances of any individual. With regard to the question of the observance of Lent, he thought that a mistake had been made, because, instead of its being contended that the people should fast, the object was to make the doors of the theatre fast. When the substantial observance of Lent had been already done away with by so many persuasions of Christians, he thought it was a ridiculous relic of ancient times to endeavour to continue any part of it in this country, and he thought that it was going rather too far, and it was wasting the time of the House, to call the stopping of the performances of two theatres on two nights of the week a relic of antiquity.

Mr. *Plumtre* rose amidst loud cries of question and divide. He said that he saw with pain that the noble Lord had given way to the hon. Member for Finsbury; for, he thought, that great violence would be done by the adoption of the noble Lord's proposition to the feelings of a great portion of the inhabitants of this country.

Mr. *T. Duncombe* inquired whether the noble Lord would pledge himself that next year the theatres would not have this restriction upon them which prohibited them from performing [cries of "*No, no!*]. If that were so he should of course withdraw his motion, but if he did not explicitly understand this to be intended, he should pursue a different course. He hoped that if the noble Lord pledged himself to adopt the measure which he had suggested, the subject would not again be referred to until some distinct proposition was made.

Lord *J. Russell* begged leave to say that he had only stated the general intention of the Government, but he did not give any undertaking upon the subject. He should decidedly object to the motion being withdrawn.

The *Speaker:* does the hon. Member propose to divide?

Mr. *T. Duncombe:* Yes, it appears to me that I am exactly where I was before. I do not wish to give the House the trouble to divide, but I do not consider the matter settled merely because the noble Lord says he will bring in a Bill on the subject. I wish to know whether he has the sanction of the Bishop of London. that he shall propose the measure he has suggested. I repeat that I do not wish to give the House the trouble to divide, but I have a right to ask this question. On a former occasion the noble Lord said, he had consulted the Bishop of London, and I simply ask whether that right rev. Prelate has given his sanction to the proposition which the noble Lord has made. I know I have no right to reply, and therefore I ask the question.

Mr. *C. Buller* said, that his hon. Friend ought to think himself exceedingly triumphant. His triumph could not be more conspicuous, after the noble Lord had given way to the decided opinion of the House and of the country. He must, therefore, request his hon. Friend to look to the impolicy of dividing the House, when the only result which could follow would be the loss of his amendment, by those hon. Members who had come down with an intention to support him, voting in opposition to him.

Mr. *Duncombe* said, that under the circumstances he should withdraw his amendment.

Lord *J. Russell* should object to its being withdrawn.

Amendment negatived.

The House then resolved itself into a Committee of Supply.

Navy Estimates.] On the question that the naval force for the present year be 34,165 seamen, and 9,000 marines, including 200 boys,

Sir *R. Peel* said, that it was not his intention to give any opposition to the vote which was proposed. Her Majesty's Government, on their own responsibility, had proposed for the consideration of the House, that a certain number of seamen should be the general naval establishment of this country, and it was nearly impossible for any Member of that House to enter so fully into the subject of the navy or army establishment as to be able to question the propriety of the grant, but the Government must be presumed to have a much more accurate knowledge of all the circumstances of the case, than those who had not access to official information, and who could judge therefore only by the general aspect of affairs; and therefore, unless there was something unusual in the vote which would lead to a strong belief that it was much too small, or that it was extravagantly great, it was extremely difficult for any hon. Member to propose an alteration in it. The main consideration which Parliament should have upon this subject was, as to the amount of the vote; and, in reference to this, they must look, first to the relative strength of the naval establishment in this country with that of the other powers; and secondly, to the present aspect of affairs, and the probability of this country being called upon to bring its resources into operation. Now, considering either one or other of these matters, he came to this conclusion—that the amount of men proposed for the navy establishment of this country could not be objected to on the ground of its exceeding that which was necessary. He could not say that it was an extravagant amount, but on the contrary, it was more likely that he should say that the demands on it would be sufficiently answered by the provision made. It was impossible not to see that the exertions made by other powers—it might be without any hostile design—by the United States—France and Russia, were becoming great naval powers, and were preparing to cope with Great Britain in the superiority which it had hitherto maintained over the seas, and it was impossible, therefore, to exclude the importance of those maritime powers from the consideration of the House. There was one material point also—that the House must not only take the actual strength with which it was possible to appear when it might be called upon to come in collision with other nations, into consideration, but also the degree of assistance which we might expect from our allies. Let the House look at the strength of the Russian fleet in the Baltic at this time. They must not, however, determine the amount of possible danger by its mere extent, but they must look at the other fleets there, and if they found that Russia had a complete preponderating power there, it was most material to consider, whether this arose as well from its own strength, as from the assistance which it might gain. In 1790 there was a most formidable conflict there. Russia and Sweden were then opposed to each other, and Sweden had no more than eighteen sail-of-the-line there, with which she contended against twenty-three Russian vessels, and it would, therefore, be found that the Russian preponderance proceeded not merely on account of her own superior strength, but on account also of the diminution of the other powers on the shores of the Baltic, on whose co-operation this country might have reckoned. Then, again, let them compare the exertions of France with those made in former times, and also those of the United States, and they would see the mode in which they were preparing themselves. When he said this, however, he was willing to admit, that nothing could be worse policy than to show too feverish, too active a jealousy, with respect to the progress of those states. If the country had peace, let it have the full advantages of peace; and if they made any active demonstrations, they must do it in such a way as to bring no evil consequences upon themselves; but he looked to the strength of the country, and to the tremendous exertions she would have to make in case of any war breaking out, and while he was one of the last to advise that they should increase their resources during peace by an unnecessary demonstration, and by that means inducing other persons to magnify their own strength by reason of the suspicions which they should entertain, he was at the same time bound to say, that when the exertions made by other naval powers were witnessed, the time was arrived when this country should sedulously apply itself, not to a sudden demonstration of strength, but to a gradual and prudent collection of its materials of warfare, with which in the event of war breaking out, they would find reason to congratulate themselves they were not unprovided. On that ground he hoped, that her Majesty's Government would seriously consider the condition of the British navy, so as to make such additions as would enable them to compete with other naval powers. He should have been contented to discuss this matter upon the general principle; but that the hon. Gentleman, the Secretary to the Admiralty, finding himself pressed by a pretty unanimous, or at least a general expression of dissatisfaction at the conduct of the Admiralty, thought it expedient to rest his defence mainly upon the reductions made in the navy during the time he (Sir R. Peel) had been in office, and he said that Conservative attacks were very rife upon the Government. In reply to that, he begged to say, that he was no party to any of those attacks, and so far from considering, that they ought to be called Conservative attacks, he should say, that the assaults upon them came from a different quarter, while their best defence proceeded from a Conservative. The greater part of the attacks made upon the present management of the navy, came from persons whose politics corresponded with those of her Majesty's Government—at least, that was true of a great many amongst the writers upon the subject. It did appear to him surprising, that Government should be so sore upon the subject, seeing, that so large a proportion of those from whom the attacks proceeded, so far from incurring their displeasure, had actually been rewarded. The individual who signed himself "A Flag Officer" was of course not known—appearing under that assumed title they could not tell what might have been his reward; but Lieutenant Crauford, now a commander, who wrote upon the state of the Russian navy, had been promoted—so likewise had been Captain Napier. That gallant officer did not conceal the expression of his opinions, but he was rewarded, and the defender of the Government was Sir John Barrow, a Conservative. Then on the assumed ground, that the assailants of the Government on this subject were all Conservatives, the Secretary to the Admiralty, thought proper to attack him and his Government; he should now, therefore, proceed to consider whether the attacks made upon him were well-founded, whether the course which the present Government pursued could be justified and defended by an attack upon the Government with which he was connected, and having repelled the accusations brought against him, he should proceed to inquire whether the conduct of the present Administration was altogether free from reproach on the ground of neglect or misconduct. At this moment the cry had set in against economy; and he, when in office had been charged with neglecting economy. Now, he should show, that he had not been guilty of that; he should show also why he had listened to the doctrines of the economists, and proposed what was said to have been too small an amount of naval force. An hon. Member had said to him, "You are the cause of all the attacks which are now made upon us; your Government in the years 1834-5 proposed more inadequate estimates than were ever proposed before;" and therefore the hon. Member inferred, that he (Sir R. Peel), who had neither suggested nor incited any attacks on the Board of Admiralty, ought to bear the blame of any improper attacks which might have been made upon it at a former period Now, he would just remind the House, that though they might vote 35,000 seamen and marines as a fit establishment for the year 1839, that was no proof in itself, that his estimates for the years 1834-5 were inadequate. He requested the House to consider the situation in which he stood at that time. At the close of the year 1834 he came into office. He had to consider what should be the amount of the estimates for the ensuing year. He found, that in the year 1818, when he had also been in administration, we had been content with a force of 20,000 seamen and marines for the navy, and that in the year 1823, we had only a force of 25,000 seamen and marines for the same service. In the commencement, then, of 1835, he had proposed that the naval force for the year should be 20,000 seamen and marines. Now it was no proof, that though in 1818 he had thought a force of 20,000 men sufficient, the vote which he proposed in 1835 was inadequate; and even if the hon. Gentlemen opposite could prove that their vote of 35,000 men for the present year was right, it was no proof, that his estimates for 1835 were justly liable to condemnation. What were the circumstances, he would ask, under which he had proposed the estimates of 1835? He landed in England on the 9th of December, 1834. At that time he had not accepted office. He accepted office the next day—on the 10th of December, 1834. The Board of Admiralty was formed about the 1st of January, 1835. The House of Commons had required, that the estimates for the year should be laid on its Table within a fortnight after the meeting of Parliament. What, then, was the course which he had to pursue? In the month of August, 1834, his Majesty had declared in a speech from the Throne, that profound peace prevailed throughout the whole of Europe, and that all anxiety for the fate of Turkey was at an end, and his Ministers had taken credit for the successful exertions which they had made upon that score; and had informed the country that it was in no danger from any renewal of hostilities. The Board of Admiralty, he must again repeat, was not formed till 1st of January, 1835. He therefore determined to take this course — namely, to adhere to the estimates, which his predecessors in the government, who were in office up to November, 1834, had prepared, with the full knowledge of all the exigencies of the public service. It had been stated in the course of the debate, and that statement had not yet been contradicted, that three-fourths of the foundations of the estimates for the year 1835 had been prepared by the Administration which quitted office in November, 1834. In those estimates he found nothing to warrant even a suspicion on his part that they anticipated any interruption of peace; on the contrary, it appeared as if they entertained no fears about the prospect of peace being obscured, and that they were of opinion, that it would not be wise to incur the jealousy of foreign Powers by increasing either our naval or our military establishments. He looked, then, to the provisions which had been made for them by his predecessors in office, and he found that the impressions which had been created by his Majesty's Speech from the Throne in August, 1834, were completely confirmed by the draught of the estimates for 1835, which they had left behind them in their respective offices. He found, likewise, that if any inference as to their belief of the profound security of the world could be deduced from their inadequate preparations, that inference was greatly confirmed by the force ready for service in the different ports and harbours of the country. What vessels had they at the close of the year 1834, in the three principal ports of Portsmouth, Plymouth, and Sheerness? You had not at that time in any one of those three ports a single first-rate, nor a single second-rate, nor a single third-rate, nor even a single fourth rate—nay, you had not even a single sloop or any steam vessels. You had there, it was true, stationary vessels, but not a single vessel ready for sea was there in any one of the ports and harbours of Great Britain. He had a right, then, to infer, that his predecessors in office had no fear of any danger, and that they had no notion of any likelihood of the prospects of peace being obscured. He had therefore taken their estimates for the preceding year; and the first question which he had asked himself upon them was, as to the number of seamen and marines which had been actually employed. He found that it fell short of the number voted by 1,200 men. Three large vessels, the Caledonia, the Trafalgar, and a third ship of the line, of which he had forgotten the name, had subsequently returned home. The reliefs had all been sent out, and the actual number of men employed fell about 1,200 short of the number which had been voted. He had therefore taken as the foundation of his estimate, not the number contained in the estimates of the preceding year, but the number of men actually employed by virtue of it. But that was not the only foundation he went upon. As our appointment to office was not calculated to endanger the peace of Europe, as the country had amicable relations with all the foreign Powers, Ministers in 1835 determined to follow in the steps of their predecessors in office up to November, 1834, and not to propose any increase in the establishments. But it would have been open to them, if you would have granted to us, which you would not, the experience of four or five months in the administration of public affairs—on finding, as he had little doubt but that they should have found, that their estimates were inadequate—it would have been open to the Ministers to come down to the House at a subsequent period, and to state, that such was the case; and under such circumstances he thought, that the House would have more readily given him increased powers, if he had said, "We did not like to act upon mere apprehensions of danger—we did not like to spread consternation and alarm throughout the country. The experience of a few months has shown us, that we were wrong in the view which we took of foreign affairs, and now we have acquired the knowledge, that a greater force is wanted than that which we originally required." He was sure, that that was the course which men of sense would have pursued, and he was also sure, that it was a course to which the House of Commons would have assented. "We were not, however, admitted," continued Sir R. Peel, "to that experience; and I am not warranted from the experience of what has occurred, in saying, that if we had proposed larger estimates than those which we then laid upon the table of the House, we should have found a very ready acceptance of them at your hands. All I know upon that subject is, that the hon. Member for Kilkenny proposed, that our estimates should be referred to a Select Committee, and that in that proposition he was supported by some fifty or sixty of his Friends. Our estimates, which are now considered so open to the fatal objection of economy, were then kept so long in a state of suspense in that House, that we were obliged to come down to the House and inform the hon. Member, that if we did not gain one vote upon them, we should not be able to discharge the half-pay and pensions of the seamen and marines. I was myself obliged to ask the hon. Member for Kilkenny to wave his objections to that item in the estimates, and to allow me to take a vote upon it without discussion. But if, instead of taking that course, I had come down to the House and said, "These Gentlemen are cutting down the estimates too narrowly, they are not aware of the exigencies of the public service; let us increase the force of the navy; let us add to the number of seamen and marines; there is nothing like preparing for war," what chance should I have had of carrying such increased estimates, supposing that I had been induced to propose them? I proposed, then, under these circumstances, the estimates of 1835; and my charge against you now is, why, if you thought those estimates so inadequate as you now state them to be—why, if you thought that I was at that time undermining the sources of British power and of British ascendancy, you did not yourselves come forward to propose such larger estimates as you yourselves thought commensurate with the demands of the public service? You at any rate were not inexperienced in public affairs; you knew well what was the state of Europe in 1834. If you thought my estimates for that year too much reduced, why was not a single whisper heard from your ranks against the measures of retrenchment and economy which I then proposed? The hon. Member opposite (Mr. Hume, we believe) behaved on that occasion fairly enough. When we put in our claim, as advocates for economy, he said, "Oh, no! such a claim does not belong to you." Our claims to economy at that time were disputed, and when we showed that our estimate was less than the estimate for the preceding year by 1,200 men, it was replied, that no credit was due to us for that reduction; we were told that our economy was reluctant—that it was forced upon us, and that we were only treading in the steps of our predecessors. But not a single whisper was then heard that our retrenchment was ill-judged and extravagant. Why was it not? In 1835 not one of you was manly enough to call upon the House for an increased vote to the navy; but now, in 1839, when the tide has set in against economy, and when the cry is for increased naval establishments, you are content, one and all of you, to sail with the stream, because it is in favour of that increase, and you say, with smirking self-sufficiency, that all the evils arising from the present reduced state of our naval establishments ought to be visited upon the head of my administration of 1835. But what was the amount of the enormous reductions which we made in that year? On the 1st of December, 1834, the naval establishment left to us by our predecessors in office amounted to eleven sail-of-the-line, classed under the head of fourth-rates, and altogether to 160 pennants. Our inadequate estimates enabled you, however, to have, on the 1st of December, 1835, 167 ships employed in the naval service of the country—so that the result of our enormous reductions was, that you had at the close of the year a positive increase in the force of the year 1835 over that of the year 1834. It is true that you supported a much greater increase in the naval estimates for the next year. You have said that I taunted you with doing so from an undue fear of the power of Russia. I am bound to say that I have no recollection of having used any such taunt. I said it would have been better had you assigned the real cause of the increase which you then made; but I do not recollect having ever taunted the noble Lord opposite on the score of his alarm upon the exertions of Russia. A large increase, however, was made, no matter as to the cause, in 1836 to the navy estimates; and now, with the utmost simplicity, the hon. Secretary for the Admiralty comes forward and asks us what reasons had we for consenting to increase the estimates of 1836 which did not apply with equal force to increasing the estimates of 1835. Why, I heard, with my own ears, the hon. Gentleman make a speech of more than an hour and a-half's duration, in explanation of the reasons which, he said, existed for increasing the naval estimates of 1836. He did not at that time venture to assert that the estimates of the preceding year had been improperly prepared; and the noble Lord, the leader of the party—what did he say upon them? I put it to the House broadly and distinctly, has the course of either the noble Lord or the hon. Secretary been fair to us upon this occasion? In 1835 neither of them ventured upon any objection to my estimates. In 1836 an increased estimate was proposed under their auspices, on the ground that the public service required that an additional force of 5,000 men should be employed. In the course of the debate which took place upon that proposed increase, I said, "I assent to it with readiness, for I cannot see that the estimates of 1835 should be the rule for the estimates of 1836.' That, however, was not the language which the noble Lord used at that time. What then was it? On the navy estimates for 1836 being proposed, the noble Lord said, that he was ready to admit that when the estimates of the preceding year were prepared, there was no necessity for a larger estimate than that which was then submitted to Parliament, but that he was convinced that if an increase had then been called for, it would have been assented to. But why should I overlay this point with unnecessary argument? Why should I again remind the House, that if my estimates were inadequate, it was the duty of the noble Lord and his friends to have come forward and remedied the deficiency at the time, and that nevertheless they one and all shrunk from the performance of that duty, because economy and retrenchment were the order of the day, and the tide had not, at that time set against them? What could have been easier, if my estimates were so palpably under the mark—what could have been easier than for the noble Lord or for some Member of his Government, to have come down to the House in June, 1835, and to have said—' These estimates were prepared with a view to economy by those who had but an inadequate knowledge of the circumstances of the country. We know better what the country requires, and here is a supplementary estimate containing the items of the increased grant which we demand from you.' If you could have convinced Parliament that such an estimate was necessary, Parliament would have granted it willingly, and then you would have acted more manfully than you are acting now, when, after keeping our condemnation snugly in your pockets for four years and more, you are producing it to answer one of your party purposes." The right hon. Baronet then proceeded to observe, that he did not presume to condemn Government for attempting, in the present state of our finances to reconcile their professions of economy with a due regard to the service of the country. He hoped, however, that Government would well consider the situation in which we were placed at present. He did not wish to diffuse anxiety or consternation throughout the country; but looking to the present condition of our affairs on the north-west frontier of India—looking, too, at the war in which we might be embarked at the other extremity of the globe—looking at the state of Canada—at the unsettled question which we had with the United States, and at the active demonstrations which were making by other states in the other hemisphere, he could not refrain from expressing a hope that the Government would consider carefully whether there was no at present justifiable cause for increasing the naval establishments of the country—an increase which, in point of fact, might ultimately be more economical than any rash dimunition of them. He did not say this in any hostile spirit to Her Majesty's Government, for he was well aware of the necessity under which they laboured of reconciling as far as they could the demands of the public service with those of economy. His charge against the Government—for he had now done with the defence of his own Administration, his charge against the Government, or rather his suspicion of neglect and misconduct on the part of the Government, was founded on this circumstance, that they would be unable with the force which they now demanded from Parliament, and to which Parliament would undoubtedly give its assent, to give that protection to the commercial interests of the country which their importance required. He looked at both the state and the amount of our present naval force. He looked also at the distribution of it; and having done that, he could not reconcile the distribution of it with the demands for protection to British commerce. He recollected well, that in the year 1836, when the hon. Secretary for the Admiralty moved for an increased grant on account of the naval estimates, he made the following statement:—

> "The first ground upon which he asked the House to consent to the resolution for an increase of 5,000 men was, that there was no British naval station in the world from which there were not pressing demands for an increased force. From the station in the Pacific, where the English trade was increasing very much, there were continued demands for an increase of naval force. The demands made upon the Admiralty in this respect had been reiterated through the Foreign-office by the Consuls of this country, as his noble Friend at the head of that department well knew. Again, similar calls had been made upon the Admiralty by the Consuls at Mexico aed Valparaiso, by the merchants resident there, and on the whole western coast of Mexico, claiming this aid in protection of their persons and their property, and declaring such increased naval force to be absolutely necessary for this purpose."*

In that paragraph of the hon. Gentleman's speech he had distinct and positive proof that her Majesty's Ministers were aware of the necessity for increasing our naval force to give protection to our commerce on the coasts of South America. Nay more, he had a direct admission from them that daily applications were made to them for the presence of such a naval force. He found, that at present we had a force of twenty-one ships of the line, and of 35,000 seamen and marines; and now he asked them whether we had been able with that force to give that protection to British commerce in South America which our interests required? As he did not wish to enter into the general question at present, he would confine himself to the case of British interests in Mexico. First of all, let the House look to their amount. There were eight or nine large bodies of British capitalists engaged in mining operations in that country. Moreover, there was a very considerable debt due from Mexico to the inhabitants of this country. You would also find at Mexico, Vera Cruz, Oaxaca, indeed at almost every large port and populous internal town in that part of South America, extensive British commercial establishments. The amount of British capital thus invested in Mexico was sufficient to demand of the Government, that it should look carefully to its protection. What, he asked, had recently occurred? So long ago as the 21st of March, 1838, they were aware, that France was about to enforce her claims—perhaps just claims, perhaps claims neglected by Mexico—by demanding reparation, and if that was refused, by exacting it from the Mexican Republic. Very soon after that date they must have been aware that France not only required from Mexico reparation for the injury she had sustained, and the dismissal of the judges and officers who had, as was alleged, improperly and illegally treated French subjects, but also preferred what certainly appeared at first sight to be rather a novel demand for one independent state to make to another as a *sina quâ non* for avoiding the consequences of a declaration of war—that the French inhabitants settled in Mexico should be entitled to carry on a retail trade on the same footing as Mexican subjects. The notification made by the French Chargé d'Affaires to the Mexican authorities in March 1838, was couched in the following terms:—"Should, which God forbid, this answer," to the three demands, that was, "be in the negative upon only one point, should it even be doubtful, upon only one point, should it finally be delayed beyond the 15th of April, the undersigned must then immediately place the continuation of this affair in the hands of the senior commander of his Majesty's naval forces, of which a division is actually on the coast of Mexico, and this officer will put in execution the orders he has already received." This, then, was a decisive proof that the French naval force was on the coast in March, 1838, and the commander of that force had orders, if satisfaction were not given, to enforce reparation. He said not a word as to whether or not the French government were right in demanding reparation in this fashion, but, assuming that France was perfectly justified, surely, when her navy was to be used for enforcing her rights, the British subjects in Vera Cruz and other places had a right to be protected. How was it possible for a powerful country like France to proceed to exact reparation by violent means without so far endangering the security of the lives and property of British subjects as to make the intervention of the mother country necessary? Necessary for what purpose? To attack the French? No, but to give confidence to British subjects—to form a guarantee, that right and justice would be observed in carrying the projected hostile operations into effect. Early in the summer, in July at the latest, they knew that France was fitting out an expedition against Mexico. The French squadron sailed from Brest on the 13th of September, and arrived at Vera Cruz about the 25th of October. The bombardment of San Juan d'Ulloa was executed on the 27th of November. After all the warnings we had had of the danger to which British interests were about to be exposed, we had no British minister resident in Mexico. He believed, that Mr. Pakenham did not arrive till after the attack. [Viscount *Palmerston*: there was a British consul on the spot.] He did not mean to say, that the British embassy was absolutely vacant, or that no subordinate officer was present, but he must say, when most important interests were exposed to imminent danger, there ought to have been a British Minister, and not a Consul, to look to them. The minister did not arrive at Vera Cruz till the 22nd of December, while the attack on San Juan d'Ulloa took place on the 27th of November, and that on Vera Cruz on the 4th or 5th of December. What naval force was there on the coast of Mexico to afford protection to British subjects? Was there a single British ship of war at Vera Cruz at the time when the attack was made? He did not ask the question without reason, as would be seen by the account of the transactions which then took place, which he would quote purposely from the papers that were supposed to vindicate the policy of Government. He found this statement of facts in the *Globe* newspaper of the 8th of February, professing to come from a correspondent at Falmouth:—

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* Hansard, 3rd Series, vol. xxxi. 1229.

> "They say that the French would have been cut off but for the distance of the army from the city, and the unexpectedness of the disembarcation of the French, as the British Vice-Consul is said by Santa Anna to have pledged himself most faithfully for the French, that they were not to disembark until after eight o'clock in the morning. The situation of the British inhabitants may be conceived, when it is related that not a single man-of-war lay there."

The Satellite, a sixteen-gun brig, stated to have been at Vera Cruz, was said by this correspondent to have gone on a cruise during the negotiation of the treaty, which would throw the whole of the losses sustained by the British on the Government, as the commander of the Satellite must have been aware of the difficulties that existed, and that the treaty, having been offered during the bombardment, would never have been acceded to by the Mexicans. He (Sir Robert Peel) would say nothing as to the doctrine maintained by the writer—that Government was liable for the losses of British subjects, but he wished to know why the single British ship of war should have left the neighbourhood of Vera Cruz after the capture of San Juan d'Ulloa. Even if it had remained there, would it be contended, that with our twenty-one sail-of-the-line and 34,000 seamen and marines, a single brig of sixteen guns could afford sufficient protection to our interests? He (Sir Robert Peel) was anxious to say nothing that might prevent any pending negotiations from being brought to a satisfactory conclusion; his questions were mainly directed, not to the claims of France, but the conduct of her Majesty's Government. This correspondent stated, that,

> "However, after the first movement of the French, about thirty persons obtained a refuge on board the Express, and the day after she left, the Madagascar arrived."

The Express, he (Sir Robert Peel) believed, left on the 15th of December. The *Morning Chronicle*, in the account received from its correspondent, stated,

> "The greater part of the wealthy inhabitants of Vera Cruz had proceeded to Jalapa, taking with them their valuables. No British ship of War was at Vera Cruz at the time of this occurrence, and the Express packet was therefore detained to receive on board the British subjects."

If Government replied to him, where was the use of having the British force in the neighbourhood of Vera Cruz or on the coast of Mexico, when we acknowledge the right of the French to blockade the coast, when we say that France is justified by the law of nations in taking this course to obtain redress for the injuries she has suffered? then, he would ask, why have you a squadron on the coast of Mexico at present? What was your object in withdrawing the whole of your force from the North American station, and despatching it to the Gulf of Mexico? Not, he presumed, to attack the French force. He trusted there was no ground for apprehending that. He presumed it was to prevent, in the excitement consequent upon a conflict, the possibility of outrage being committed by unauthorized parties on the property or the personal safety of British subjects, or to give them the means of escape, and provide them with some better resource in time of danger than the Express packet. Well, but how did it happen, that with such ample notice that war was meditated by France, or at least hostile operations—for war, be it observed, had never been declared—and with such ample appliances for the protection of British commerce, the first duty of Government, that of providing for the safety of its subjects from hostile assaults, had been for a long time entirely neglected? According to the statement he had read, there had been no ship at hand to watch over our interests, but a little gun-brig up to the 1st of December; and after that day even that source of protection was cut off, for the Satellite left the coast. He said Government had ample means of protecting British commerce. Why, we had now eleven sail-of-the-line in the Mediterranean. The statement made by the hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. C. Wood) the other night was, that there was no necessity for keeping eleven sail-of-the-line on that station; that no dangers menacing British interests in that quarter required a preponderating force; but that it was better to employ these ships in the Mediterranean than to retain them at home. Now, either it was necessary to keep eleven sail-of-the-line in the Mediterranean, or it was not. If it were necessary to have eleven sail-of-the-line in the Mediterranean, and two at Lisbon, then all he could say was, that the remaining seven sail-of-the-line in commission were very inadequate to the duty of protecting the coasts of this country, and meeting unforeseen dangers that might assail us without warning. If, on the other hand, so many ships were not wanted in the Mediterranean, why were not five or six sail recalled to the home station, to be kept as a reserve, ready to be called into action on unlooked-for contingencies? He wished to have an explanation from Government as to the present distribution of the naval force. He could not account for the disproportion between the force at present maintained at home, and that maintained at former periods. How was it possible for Ministers now to get a force ready speedily in case of any unexpected emergency? Suppose they had had to send out the ships to Mexico at short notice from the home station, how could they have effected it? The hon. Gentleman opposite had told them it was not necessary to keep ships at home, because they could send out a steam-vessel to the Mediterranean station and recall them in a very short space of time. That, however, was but a frail stay on which to place dependence, subject, as such a communication must be, to so many accidents from the weather, and from the risk of capture. What progress had been made lately in fitting out ships wanted to relieve others on foreign stations? The Malabar had lately returned from the American station, and it became necessary to supply her place by the Implacable. Would the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Admiralty state to the House how much time had been consumed in fitting out that single ship of the line? If the ordinary at home was in such a state of forwardness that it could be brought speedily forward for active service, he greatly doubted whether they would have withdrawn their ships from the American station, and not rather have sent them out to Mexico from this country. If they kept eleven sail-of-the-line in the Mediterranean without any demand for their services, and two sail at Lisbon, while it appeared that at the same time there was but one ship-of-war, or not even one present during the bombardment of San Juan and the capture or assault of Vera Cruz to give protection to British property, he knew not what vindication of themselves Government could make to the commercial interests of this country. Look at the force of 1792, at a time of profound peace. In that year we had eleven guardships protecting the coast of Great Britain. In 1834, on the 1st of December, preceding his own appointment to office, we had not, except stationary ships, a single sail-of-the-line on the home station. He could not see the wisdom of this policy, even although there might be no immediate danger of invasion. It was surely imprudent in the Government of a country possessing such a vastly extended commerce, to leave the great naval ports without the means of meeting unforeseen demands upon our navy that might be created by such events as had lately occurred at Buenos Ayres and Vera Cruz. He greatly feared that in such cases the absence of a British naval force—he did not mean a force with hostile intentions, for he trusted the assertion of the hon. Secretary to the Admiralty, who had assured them that we might keep a sufficient force at Mexico without in the slightest degree endangering a collision with France—would always be attended with results disadvantageous to this country. If we appeared to take no interest in such events—if we abandoned the great arm of our supremacy, and permitted other Powers to have a predominance over us in these expeditions—if we allowed great Powers to exact hard conditions from independent states, and say, "If you fail to give us satisfaction on every one of the points we insist on, we will take your capital, and sack your towns;" and if we sent no British force to the scene of operations to watch over the lives and property of the Queen's subjects, the commanding influence of this country would be diminished in those distant quarters of the globe, and we might come to regret that some of the eleven ships on the Mediterranean station had not been more usefully employed in demonstrating that Britain had not quite forgotten the existence of those regions. How likely was it, that in the excitement and heat of the contending parties, acts might be done, perhaps without the intention to offend, which might place us under the disagreeable necessity of demanding reparation? An instance of this had but lately occurred—a British pilot had been taken out of the only ship of war we had on the coast of Mexico, the Express packet. He earnestly and fervently hoped that that act might not create any even temporary misunderstanding between two great countries. He should avoid saying one single word that could by possibility throw any difficulty in the way of an arrangement, perfectly satisfactory and honourable to both countries. "I feel," said the right hon. Baronet, "the most perfect confidence that a great country like France, jealous of its own honour, will be the first to respect the honour of other countries. I have the greatest confidence that the remarkable and distinguished man who fills the throne of France, and rules the destinies of her people, who exercises the influence he possesses over the councils of that country less because he is its monarch and has the regal state, than because, as I firmly believe, he combines in himself greater qualities for empire than any of its kings since the time of Napoleon, because he has known the vicissitudes of adversity and prosperity, and been taught sagacity by exposure to misfortune; because he has had wonderful opportunities of exhibiting both personal and moral courage—opportunities that are rarely given to any other man—because, from the union in him of so great courage, fortitude, experience, and prudence, he will be regarded by posterity in France as inferior only to the great warrior-statesman I have mentioned—I repeat, that I have the greatest confidence that under such auspices an amicable and mutually satisfactory arrangement may be effected. I can readily believe that, in the warmth and hurry of conflict, injuries may be inflicted for which, although unintentionally offered, it may become necessary to demand reparation. But what I want to know—and the time must come when we must know it, for the satisfaction of the people of England—is, what has actually taken place? My advice is, do not call for the information precipitately. Keep the question of the conduct of Government entirely separate from the question of our relations with France. Avoid anything which may wound the sensitive feelings of the French people; do not be too hasty in demanding acknowledgments which may preclude the possibility of a satisfactory arrangement; but this we must know—what steps have Government taken in order to set this question in a light perfectly satisfactory? It appears, that the officer in command of the packet offered no resistance to the proceeding of the French captain. I do not mean to assert, that the officer should have made any such chivalrous and romantic resistance as would have risked the lives of his men for the purpose of protecting the pilot. But, it was clear, that the French had no right to remove the pilot; and the officer ought, at least, to have made a strong remonstrance. He ought to have said, "To superior force I will yield, but to nothing but superior force. I stand upon the deck overpowered; you may take the pilot; I will not offer a resistance that I know must be fruitless; I will not peril the lives of my gallant crew, and run the chance of being sunk if I fire at you; but I surrender to superior force, and I strike my flag." "We must know," pursued the right hon. Baronet, "if we stand upon that footing; we must also know how it happens that the admiral in command failed to give a direct and immediate account of a transaction so important. This occurrence took place on the 4th of December; this is the 11th of March, and yet we are imperfectly informed on the whole transaction. We must know what were the feelings entertained by a British officer in command that could prevent him from immediately communicating with the Admiralty, and giving the fullest explanation He knew," the right hon. Baronet proceeded, "the Admiralty must be aware of all the circumstances of the transaction, but he, for one, would forbear to call for them at the present moment, because he wished to throw no difficulty in the way of a settlement. Of course, the moment that Lieutenant Croke landed on the British shore he was at the command of the Admiralty. The Admiralty could not mean to say, that because that officer wrote a letter to some consul, or other authority, which reached them through a third channel, they should remain inactive on his landing, without directing his immediate appearance before them, and requiring from him a full and sufficient account of the affair. They must see also what was the nature of the apology stated to have been made to the British admiral. He took it for granted that such an apology had been given, and he trusted it had been satisfactory. He hoped that, if for no other purpose, yet for that of preventing the principles of international law from being unsettled by any rash or unwarrantable act, and for the prevention of the enormous evils which must ensue, if the British flag, or any other neutral flag, were not considered a safe protection to those who sailed under it, occupied, for instance, in delivering the ship from peril in their capacity of pilots, all the circumstances of this transaction would remain upon record. He had now brought his observations to a close. He had said before, that he would cordially aid the Government in providing means for placing at our command a more efficient navy than we at present possessed; he would support any increase that Government might propose in the estimates, with the object of widening, if he might so say, the foundations of our naval power, and securing a regular supply of ships to be built from time to time. As he had stated, he should neither withhold his assent to the present estimates, nor should he press for information at present on the topics to which he had referred. But the three topics on which he had risen, principally with a view of insisting, were, first, his complaint of the neglect displayed by Government of the increasing demands for protection made at the present time by British commerce in every part of the world; secondly, he had put forth his defence of his own Government for not bringing forward larger estimates; and, thirdly, he had stated the ground on which he imputed misconduct to the Board of Admiralty, that, with the votes they had taken, and the number of men and of sail of the line they had at their disposal, they should have so far neglected British interests in South America, and especially on the coast of Mexico, as the information before the country, if it were true, warranted him in asserting. But he should wish to ask, at some future period, if it were possible that San Juan d'Ulloa was taken on the 27th of November, and the attack on Vera Cruz was made on the 5th of December, but that the British fleet did not arrive in the offing until the 31st of December, and that even when Vera Cruz was taken, that small fleet neglected to give due assistance to the British commercial interests in the place. He did think that the time would come when the country would require on these points a full explanation, as well as on that other point, of the insult which had been offered to the national flag, when (he could most sincerely say) he hoped to have the satisfaction to learn, that nothing had been omitted, on the part of the Government, to provide for the interests of British commerce, and to exact reparation for the insult which had been offered to the honour of the navy.

Mr. *Labouchere* understood the right hon. Gentleman to make it a matter of grave reprehension, that any allusions had been made to his Government in the way of censure, for having proposed to reduce, during his administration, the number of men in the navy. Now, what were the facts of the case? His hon. Friend, the Secretary for the Admiralty, said, in answer to long tirades of abuse, that had been cast on the Government, and which had been kept up systematically for the last six months, not only in the public prints and at public dinners, but in that House, that it was most improper to make such attacks on the Government of Lord Melbourne, and charge them with making improper reductions in the naval force of the country, for the lowest estimate that had been presented to the House of Commons for a series of years, was prepared by the Government of the right hon. Baronet. The right hon. Gentleman said, that he had given no encouragement to the attacks that had been made on the Government on this point. He fully admitted this, and would prove that many things were done by Gentlemen opposite to which the right hon. Baronet was no party, and which he would not in any way countenance. He was a member of the Board of Admiralty, when his right hon. Friend opposite (Sir J. Graham) was at the head of that department; he not only entertained a sense of grateful feeling for the conduct his right hon. Friend had pursued towards him at that time, but he was satisfied, that no one could be more zealous for the welfare of the service than the right hon. Baronet. At the same time he could not forget, that his right hon. Friend, at a meeting at Glasgow, said, that there had been a great defalcation in the naval administration of the country under the Government of Lord Melbourne, as contrasted with that of Lord Grey. He was greatly surprised at this, for he believed that this was not the case; and it was similar grave charges to this, that were made against the Admiralty, that his hon. Friend said, that he felt himself called upon to refute. But with respect to the point before the House, he had every reason to believe, that it was never the intention of the late First Lord of the Admiralty (Lord Auckland) to have reduced the estimates of 1835 as to the number of men; but, however, that might be, on this question it should be borne in mind, indeed every one knew, that the quantity of men asked for from the House for the service of the current year, was not the number borne on the books at the time, but the average number of men which the Admiralty thought it likely would be wanted throughout the year. Their object in the estimates was, that it should be as nearly as possible the average number of men which would be employed, that should be stated to the House. He could only state, that he was as positive as he could be of anything at that distance of time, that nothing was further from the thoughts of Lord Auckland and the Admiralty at that time than to reduce the number of men to be voted for the navy, and if that Board of Admiralty had been continued in office, the same number of men as was proposed by the Government of the right hon. Baronet would have been proposed to the House, and in saying this, he believed he should be borne out by all those Gentlemen who were then his colleagues in office at the Admiralty Board. Let it be observed, that in saying thus much he did not complain of the course which had been adopted that evening by the right hon. Baronet; but he thought that in justice to Lord Auckland, he could not allow the statement to go forth to the public without offering his contradiction. It had been said, that some of those in connexion with the Government of Lord Melbourne ought to have got up to blame the course to which Lord Auckland had thought it right to adhere; but he must say, that he thought Ministers of the Crown ought to pause before they got up and said, "I do not agree with the Cabinet on this point. I think, that the estimated number of men is not sufficient." This, he thought, was not a statement which should be made by any Minister, still less by any one who had left the office to the conduct of which his remarks applied. But, as it happened, he had said in the debate on the subject, that he should support the estimates of the right hon. Baronet against the hon. Member for Kilkenny; yet though he did give those estimates his support, he should have done so with more pleasure if no reduction had been made. He would not trouble the House longer than to observe, that there was one part of the speech of the right hon. Baronet which he had heard with great pleasure. He believed it was the true policy of this country to reduce the navy estimates in time of peace as low as could possibly be done consistently with the safety of the country, but at the same time to take care, that the docks and arsenals were kept in such a condition as that they might be able on occasion of any emergency of sudden danger to call into action a powerful force in a short time, and that chiefly by taking advantage of the great commercial resources of the country, on which depended its prosperity. This was the wisest and most judicious course which the Admiralty could pursue.

Sir *R. Peel* said, if he had recollected that the hon. Gentleman had objected to a reduction of the estimates on the occasion in question, he would have been the first to admit it, but he did not recollect anything of the sort. The report of the hon. Gentleman's speech, too, bore out his recollection of the debate.

Captain *A'Court* said, there had lately been published a pamphlet, as he understood, by the Secretary of the Admiralty, of which he could not omit the opportunity of declaring his opinion, that it was full of mistakes, and, moreover, that it was written in such a vapouring style, that altogether its publication was a step which, in a Secretary of the Admiralty, could not but be looked upon as most irregular and unusual. He should also take that opportunity of returning his best thanks to Captain Craufurd and the "Flag Officer" for calling the attention of the country so ably to the state of our navy; and, with respect to the latter, he would take upon him to say, that a more intelligent, a more gallant, or a more active officer did not exist in her Majesty's navy. He should not attempt to follow his hon. Friend, the Secretary of the Admiralty, through his long statement of figures, as he considered them to form a portion of the subject which was quite of a secondary nature. What he wished to call the attention of the House and of the country to was, the utterly defenceless state of the ports and harbours, of the truth of which any Gentleman might be satisfied who would take the trouble to go down and inspect them for himself. The few ships which we had afloat, he lamented to say, were not fully manned—a charge which was more particularly applicable as regarded the one line-of-battle ship we had on the Cape station, which was miserably under-manned, so much so, that in case of a war suddenly breaking out, the first intelligence of the event that would reach it would probably be conveyed by the vessel which effected its capture. He thought this was totally indefensible in the present state of European politics. Then, again, they had but a single half-manned line-of-battle ship in the three ports of the kingdom; and if hostilities were to arise on a sudden, the enemy's cruisers would be able to sweep the Channel, sail up the river, and, perhaps, even arouse the Lords of the Admiralty from their dream of security. The three naval ports of the kingdom ought never to be left without at least three line-of-battle ships to guard them, and three ships ought to be kept as much as possible cruising in the Channel, in order to keep the crews in proper exercise. If this method had been resorted to before it was too late, the late disgraceful affair off the coast of Mexico might have been prevented. But the Admiralty said, it was not yet too late to adopt some such system. Good God! not too late, when the British flag had been insulted with impunity? If the home navy was to remain in its present inefficient state, he most fervently hoped, that when the day of action came, no blame would be attributed to the officers and men of the navy in case their personal exertions should prove ineffectual to counterbalance the defects of the system. With respect to the navy of

Russia, he found, that great credit and weight was attached to an assertion which had been made on the part of the Government, that the Russian Baltic fleet was a mere parchment fleet. He could by no means assent to this. It was not wise, he thought, thus to underrate the resources of foreign Powers. He knew, that the Russian fleet was very powerful. Then there was the French fleet, another very powerful fleet, and one which was constantly equipped. He was persuaded it was unwise to depreciate the power of foreign countries; he especially feared the moral effect of such a course on the minds of the seamen. Another topic on which he had strong objections to urge against the present system was, the size of the ships. Sir John Barrow asked, why should we not do as well, in case of war, with seventy-fours and sixty-fours as those large monsters of ships. But if other nations built these large ships, how we were to get on with sixty-fours he could not find anybody to explain, and he confessed, that of himself he was unable to understand it. Moreover, he must say, that when he found we could afford to spend large sums annually upon forces engaged on the coast of Spain, without any returns of honour, glory, or profit to the country, he could not understand the naval system we were pursuing. For his part he said, and he had always said, the British navy against the world; and he most fervently hoped, that in the day of action it might not be found to be overmatched.

Mr. *Somerset Maxwell* bore testimony to the high and noble character of the "Flag Officer," who had been his friend, he said, for a series of years, and whom he knew to be possessed not only of the highest accomplishments, but of the most perfect integrity. The "Flag Officer" had been most unfairly aspersed by the hon. and gallant Admiral opposite in the previous debate.

Admiral *Adam* said, all he could say was, that in what he had said, he had referred to the speech of his hon. Friend, the Secretary of the Admiralty, who had declared, that he had convicted the "Flag Officer" of wilful misrepresentation. That was his only expression on the subject. It was made out to his satisfaction. If the "Flag Officer" had quoted Sir John Barrow's book correctly, it would not have been possible for him to have framed the misrepresentation which he had put forth. Whether he knew who "The Flag Officer" was, or not, he would say, that he who wrote that pamphlet made gross misrepresentations.

Mr. *S. Maxwell*: I have means of knowing the contrary. The gallant Admiral must know very well who "the Flag Officer" is. I have no occasion to mention his name; it is known to the whole country.

Mr. *C. Wood* felt himself called upon to make some observations after what had been said by the right hon. Member for Tamworth. He was sorry that any expressions which had fallen from him (Mr. Wood) should have given rise to the feeling on the part of hon. Gentlemen opposite, that he had made a party attack upon them. He had no intention of doing so, and the very circumstance stated by the right hon. Baronet—namely, that he had not done so in 1836, was in itself a pretty good proof that he could have had no such intention. The attacks were made upon the present Board of Admiralty, and he had felt himself throughout to be the assailed, and not the assailant party. He thought sufficient allowance had not been made for the position in which the Admiralty had been placed. Incessant attacks had been made upon them. He was aware that the representations which had been made of the inefficient state of the navy had produced a considerable effect on the public mind; he did not conceal from himself that an impression most unfavourable to the Government had thus been created, and it was of the utmost importance to the character of the Government to put a stop to such unfounded representations. What were the statements? That the navy was in a bad state; that it had been brought to this state by reductions; and that the reductions had been made by the present Government. He denied that the navy was in a bad state; and of course, therefore, he denied that it had been brought to such a state by reductions. He did not expect, however, that the mere statement of the real facts would put a stop to representations made, as he believed, mainly for party purposes; and he had, therefore, thought it necessary to show, that if those persons still persisted in their complaints, that the navy had been reduced to a state of inefficiency, the blame must be attributed to hon. Gentlemen opposite who had reduced, and not to the present Government who had increased, the navy. In defence of the reductions made by hon. Gentlemen opposite, it had been stated from the other side of the House, that it had been the intention of Lord Auckland's board to reduce the number of men, but this was an entire mistake. He (Mr. Wood) had communicated on this point with all the members of that board now in England; that was to say, with all the members of the board, except Lord Auckland himself; and the answer he had received in each instance was, that no reduction of men was ever contemplated by that board for one moment. The inference which the right hon. Baronet opposite had drawn from the number of men borne on the 31st December, 1834, was no sort of criterion of their real number for the service of the year. The numbers borne on the 31st of December were, generally speaking, smaller than at any other period. For instance on the 31st of December, 1838, the numbers were about 1,800 short; on the 1st of March, 1839, they were only 300 short; and if, on the 1st of June, they were 1,800 above the number voted, the Admiralty would still have adhered strictly to the vote of men, which only meant, as everybody conversant with the subject knew, the average number throughout the year. The noble Lord (Ashley) had stated, that Lord de Grey's board found the estimates nearly prepared, and that they had only adopted the estimates of their predecessors. This could not be so as to stores. The foundation of the store estimate was the account of the articles actually in store in the dock-yards on the 31st of December in each year. This account could not be laid before the Admiralty before the latter end of January, and could not, therefore, in 1835, have been submitted to Lord Auckland's board, who went out in December. In fact, the report of the store-keeper general of that year, which was the foundation of the estimates for 1835-6, was dated February 5th, 1835. He would add a few words upon the right hon. Gentleman's observations with respect to the distribution of our naval force. The right hon. Gentleman asked, what had been done for the protection of our trade with the increased force? The answer was, that an increase had been made on all the stations where ships were accustomed to be stationed for the protection of our commerce. If the right hon. gentleman had more closely referred to the returns which he himself had quoted, he would have found that, taking the four principal stations where ships are generally stationed for this purpose, namely, the East Indies, the Cape of Good Hope, South America, and North America and the West Indies, there had been an increase on all these stations, to such an extent that, whereas in December, 1835, the aggregate amount of force was sixty-six ships in December, 1838, the amount was eighty-nine ships. If the right hon. Gentleman took the station where he seemed to think there was the greatest need of protection for our ships, North America and the West Indies, he would find, that while in 1835, there were only twenty-six ships on this station, in 1838 there were forty. Looking at the stations in which our commerce more especially required protection, it would be found that the precautions taken had corresponded with the general increase which had been made. He would refer more particularly to the protection of our trade in Mexico. On the 26th of March, 1838, a sloop of war anchored at Sacrificios, and from that time to December, there had been a sloop of war employed in the Gulf of Mexico, being only occasionally absent from it, as, for instance, when it went to communicate with the Commodore at Jamaica. Orders were given early in the year to our commodore on the West India station to look to the protection of British interests on the coast of Mexico, and a considerable disposable force had been placed at his orders throughout the summer in the West Indies, and he was directed to employ it in case adequate representations were made to him from Mexico. If he had not thought it necessary to send a force there, it must have been simply because no such representations were made to him. When the right hon. Baronet said, that it had been necessary to withdraw the force from North America to form that which went to Mexico with Commodore Douglas, the right hon. Gentleman was very much mistaken. The force which went there consisted of ten ships. Of these, four went from England—the Edinburgh, the Pique, the Modeste, and the Rover; two were in the West Indies already, the Madagascar and the Snake; three were disposable between Bermuda and the West Indies—the Vestal, the Ringdove, and the Racehorse. The only vessel which, in any sense, could be said to have gone from North America was the Admiral's ship, the Cornwallis, which left the St. Lawrence early in August, before the Admiral had received orders to go to Mexico, and for reasons altogether unconnected with that expedition. It was perfectly true, that the squadron arrived in the Gulf of Mexico later than was expected, but this was in consequence of adverse winds and other circumstances over which the Admiralty had no control; and after all, it arrived there in sufficient time for the purpose for which it was intended. The object of sending it was not to prevent the attack on St. Juan d'Ulloa, but to support the representation of Mr. Pakenham, who went out from this country in one of the vessels composing the squadron. With reference to the remaining point to which the right hon. Baronet had alluded, the pilot taken from the Express, he (Mr. Wood) quite approved of the mode in which the right hon. Baronet had referred to it. He could assure the right hon. Gentleman, that the tone and temper in which he had spoken on the subject were concurred in by every member of the Government. He quite agreed, that ultimately all the material parts of the transaction ought to be brought before the House. In the present state of the negotiations, as he might call them, on the subject, it would, however, be premature and unadvisable to call for the papers connected with it. It was doubtless an affair of much moment—more so as to what took place between the French Admiral and our Commodore, even, than as to what occurred between Lieutenant Croke and the commander of the corvette, and still more as a question between the two Governments. It appeared, by a subsequent communication from Lieutenant Croke, that he had protested in the most decided manner against the line of conduct adopted towards him as to the pilot; that he had made every opposition, which under the circumstances it was necessary for him to do, short of actual resistance. It would be satisfactory to the committee to learn that the pilot had been seen safe in Vera Cruz a day or two after he was removed from the Express. A communication with the French government had been entered into on the subject, and the reply of the French government was a very reasonable one, that until they had received a report from Admiral Baudin, and full information on the case, they could not give a specific answer; but that they should be ready to make any reparation which, under a full knowledge of the circumstances, they might be fairly called upon to make. With regard to building ships, he agreed in the main, with the views expressed by the right hon. Member for Pembroke. About three line-of-battle-ships ought to be completed every year. He did not agree that they ought to be launched, but that they ought to be brought to a state of great forwardness on the slips. This system, which had been recommended by Lord Auckland, had been pursued with much success by the French. The ships lasted a much longer time than when they were in the water; of course more slips and roofs were required, and there was a provision in the estimates for this purpose. When, however, the right hon. Baronet complained that the present Board of Admiralty had not done as much as they ought to have done in building large ships, he must remind him that, for two years, they had been working with the diminished numbers and diminished amount of work, established for the dockyards by the right hon. Baronet himself. They had not had the means of making more progress. In 1837, however, they had made a large addition to the work of the yards. This increase was now beginning to take effect, and three ships of the line would be launched in 1839. He was sorry that they were to be put into the water, but the slips on which they stood were unsafe. It had been intended to propose a larger increase in the amount of labour for this year, but a variety of circumstances had prevented them from doing so. They had, since 1835, increased the wages from 300,000*l.* to 400,000*l.*, and would not shrink from proposing more next year, if necessary. The right hon. Member for Pembroke had seemed the other evening to doubt the accuracy of his (Mr. Wood's) statement as to the state of the American navy; but he had derived his information from very good authority, namely, the Report of the Secretary of the American navy. He spoke also of the great rapidity with which the Americans built their ships. Now, what was the fact? In 1822, the Americans had building, one ship of the line, just ready for launching; two half built, and two with their frames collected. In the present year (seventeen years after the period just mentioned) what was the progress of these vessels?—That one was launched, the three on the stocks were there still, and one frame remained collected. This was what they had actually done; what they could do on an emergency could equally be done in this country. The right hon. Member for Pembroke had referred to the state of the stores now, as compared with their state at the periods when Lord Melville and he respectively quitted office, in 1830 and 1834. The state of the stores was much the same now as at those periods. He would mention a few of the main articles. The store of timber was rather lower now than at either of these periods—the store of thick-stuff, about which there had frequently been a difficulty, was considerably higher than at either period. So also was the store of plank—that of hemp was higher than in 1830, though not quite so high as in 1834. The store of cables and cordage was not so high as in 1830, but higher than in 1834. As to canvass, there had been some delay in the deliveries; but taking the quantity in store on December 31st, and that due from contractors, the store was not quite so high as in 1830, but a good deal higher than in 1834. Taking the whole stores one with another, they were much the same now as at those periods; and a large increase was provided for in the estimates of this year.

Lord *Ashley* was understood to say, that the Government with which he had been connected had left the amount of stores rather greater than they had found them, and that, when leaving office, they had left the navy estimates about three-fourths prepared.

Captain *Pechel*, after what he had heard, could not believe that in some of the statements put forth by hon. members on the opposite side, they had been actuated so much by considerations for the honour of our great national bulwark, the navy, as by party feelings. Those who had heard the debate, and who were aware of what had been said and written out of doors on the subject, must be convinced that this great national question had been brought forward for party purposes. Had it not been so the Committee would never have heard of such preposterous objections as had been made—objections which had been demolished at one fell swoop by his hon. Friend, the Member for Halifax. But of all the humbugs which had been created in the discussions of this question, none had been greater than that of the alarm sought to be raised by the assumed probable invasion of this country by Russia. He did not include amongst those who joined in that remark the hon. Member for Birmingham (Mr. T. Attwood), whose honesty none could suspect; but he owned, that he was startled by the monstrous propositions put forth by the right hon. Baronet (Sir G. Clerk), whom he did not then see in his place. [Some hon. Members said, "He is here."] He was glad to see it. He had great respect for the right hon. Baronet. He was the Lord of the Admiralty who had signed his (Captain Pechell's) commission. That right hon. Baronet had talked of the great Russian fleet in the Baltic, and of swarms of Russian privateers in the channel. Was he prepared, then, to have twenty-seven sail of the line at the mouth of the Thames in contemplation of this talked-of Russian invasion. Or would he have that force kept up for manœuvring or for the instruction of young officers? Much stress had been laid upon the statement of Sir George Cockburn, that he had made twelve sail of the line ready for service in three days. Now, what had been the fact? It was true that six ships had been fitted out in a short time to take the troops sent out under Sir Henry Clinton to the Tagus; but they were *armé en flute*, and not fit for general service. As to our "demonstration" ships, as they had been termed, he had been bored with hon. Members coming to him to explain what they meant. He should wish that they were called conservation ships, or any other name rather than the mysterious one of "demonstration" ships. The right hon. Baronet had talked of the delay in the equipment of the Powerful, the Ganges, and the Implacable, but he should recollect that they were fitted out for four years' foreign service, and must be fitted up with all the necessary provisions and stores for that period. They were altogether differently fitted out from the ships provided to take the troops out to the Tagus. Hon. Members talked of not having ships ready when required, but what had been the answer made to applications made in 1834, for some vessels to protect our fisheries on the coast of Sussex against French ships? The answer was, that we had not a ship to spare. This was a very different case from sending ships out to Mexico; and, by the way, let him add that there had not been any application for or any demand of ships by our merchants to protect their interests in that part of the world. No application of the kind had been made to the Admiralty, or to the Secretary for Foreign Affairs. As to the improvement said to have been made in naval gunnery under the right hon. Baronet (Sir J. Graham), he did not mean to deny the fact, but the right hon. Baronet might have found the plan of that improvement in the drawer of Lord Melville who had preceded him in that office. The credit of that invention had been given to Captain Smith, though it did not belong to him. To that gentleman was owing the invention of the naval target, but not the general improvement of naval gunnery. He approved of the system of taking men from the ordinary of the navy instead of from the coast guard as heretofore, and contended, that it was unwise and impolitic to keep up a large amount of naval stores. In another place, a noble Peer had been complaining of the inefficient state of our navy. That noble Lord must now put his ship about and go upon another tack. He had been peering and prying into our dock-yards and stores (it was a wonder he did not fall into the mast-pond), and had been complaining of every thing he found there, but his opinions on such matters would weigh very little against those of such men as Admirals Bouverie and Warren. With respect to the naval administration of the right hon. Baronet opposite (Sir J. Graham), he must say, that the right hon. Baronet deserved great credit from the country, if it were only for having removed that incubus to improvement, the Navy Board. He had, moreover, placed at the head of the dock-yards a person who proved to be a most efficient officer. In reverting to the subject of our naval force with reference to what had been stated by the hon. Member opposite (Mr. Maxwell), as to our shores being unprotected and defenceless, he would ask whether it were possible for any officer to be really honest in having such fears? In the letter of the Flag Officer, so often referred to, it was said, that the Russians could come down on our shores whenever they pleased, pillage, and burn London, and carry off the inhabitants to the mines of Siberia; but he could hardly believe, that any officer could hold such absurd opinions. He thought, the statements of that letter were overdone, and although some parts of it might be of service to the navy, that it was, on the whole, unworthy of the cause. He must, however, say, that as to the manning of the vessels, unless something satisfactory were done, he should move certain resolutions on that subject; at the same time he did not blame the present Administration more than any former Administration, as to the present state of the navy. With respect also, to the pensions of the men, he thought, it was absolutely necessary that they should be retained by those who returned to the service, so that they might have the power of alloting it to their wives and families on going abroad. There was only one other subject on which he wished to make a few observations, and that was the Express packet. The hon. Member, the Secretary for the Admiralty, had met this question in a manner which he hoped the hon. Member would regret; for he thought, that when such imputations were cast on the service, as in this case, the House ought to know what was the explanation which the lieutenant who commanded the express packet had sent to the Board of Admiralty, as to the manner in which he had proceeded in yielding up at once the pilot to the Creole corvette, or resisting the application. That ought to be known for the sake of clearing up the imputations which had been cast on an officer who had always been considered a gallant officer, and whom he had known when acting on the same service on the coast of America, under most trying circumstances. There ought to be no objection to the log of that vessel being produced. It had been said that proceedings had been taken by the Government on the subject, and that a satisfactory communication from the French Government was daily expected; but as to the proceedings which had been taken by Lieutenant Croke, he thought no delay ought to take place in the House being acquainted with them.

Captain *Gordon* was not going to speak of the accusations against either Whig or Tory Governments, of which the House had already heard so much; but still he must say, that in all former votes for the navy to preceding Governments they had been compelled, by the opposition side of the House, to reduce their estimates to the lowest possible scale. The present Administration had, however, received n such opposition; from his side they had met with every support, and even the hon. Member for Kilkenny, who sometimes favoured the House with such lengthened economical speeches, had not pressed for divisions against them. There was, therefore, some difference between the two parties as to the circumstances under which their estimates were brought forward. The observations made by the hon. Gentleman opposite on the former discussion of this subject, with respect to the estimates of 1835, were, in his opinion, most unfair and uncandid; but with some degree of disappointment did he (Captain Gordon) observe that no augmentation was proposed on the present occasion. Year after year had he supported the estimates of the Government of the day, but always regretting the low scale on which they were brought forward. At the same time, he was aware that it must be on the responsibility of the executive government to fix the establishment of the year: the Government knew our relations with foreign countries, and the state of foreign navies, and on that information the amount of men necessary to be voted must depend. It was, therefore, not fair to throw blame on the naval administration on any such occasion for which they were not responsible. But there were other points in which they were to be held responsible, and one was the the distribution of the men so voted by Parliament. For a long series of years it had been the policy of the Government, and he thought it a wise policy, to keep in our ports, or the neighbourhood of the Thames, a certain number of ships ready for any services that were required in cases of emergency. He was not one of those who entertained apprehensions of any immediate aggressions from the Baltic; for although he did not mean to say that Russia could place any confidence in this country, or have any other feeling than that of distrust at the policy which we had adopted towards her, still it was the interest, the policy, and he thought the anxious wish of Russia, to be friendly with us; and, consequently, there were no well-grounded apprehensions of danger from that quarter. But still it was desirable to have a certain number of ships always ready for any sudden service. In the year 1826, which had been before alluded to, when it was deemed necessary to send a fleet to Lisbon, it was the boast of Mr. Canning that the whole force was ready in a week; but he (Captain Gordon) doubted very much whether at this moment one single ship could be got ready for service in the same time. The gallant Admiral opposite (Admiral Adam), and the hon. Secretary for the Admiralty, said, the other night, that they had disposable ships, as they had called them, in the Mediterranean, off Lisbon, and also off the north coast of Spain; but he did not know how they could call the latter disposable, for since it was considered necessary to keep a line-of-battle ship and a flag officer at Lisbon, those vessels must be there for some purpose, as he supposed, and therefore could not be removed. The gallant Admiral had also said, that, by steam navigation, we could, at a short notice, send for those ships that were stationed in the Mediterranean; but then it must depend on wind and weather as to their returning to this country, and we could not calculate on their services under a month. The gallant Admiral had said, that the troops recently sent out to Canada had been sent with the greatest possible expedition; but then he must recollect the time of year at which it took place. Parliament was called in November, and at that time the river St. Lawrence was already closed up, and therefore there were three months to collect ships from every part in the world. It had so happened, however, that an experimental squadron had been ordered to put to sea in the year 1836, under the command of Sir C. Paget, and he would just mention the vessels of which it was composed. It consisted of five sail of the line:—the Hercules, the Minden, the Vanguard, the Bellerophon, and the Pembroke. By Captain Berkeley's letter, however, it appeared that in the Hercules there were only seven men on board who were fit to take the lead, and only double that number who could take the helm; and it was not more than three days before she was found unable to proceed, and was obliged to return to Plymouth. Another of the squadron, the Minden, was found to be in so sickly a condition that in six weeks it was necessary for her to get back to Plymouth. Two others, the Vanguard and Bellerophon, on working out of Plymouth-sound, were both obliged to put back on the same day, the one having carried away her mainyard, and the other having sprung her fore-mast; and in Plymouth harbour they were detained some time. The Pembroke was the only vessel of the squadron fit for sea. So much for fitting out the fleet. The gallant Admiral had also referred to the squadron recently appearing in the gulf of Mexico; but it had been called there from a distance, and he regretted that it had not been sent earlier; for, as had been said, it was one month too late, not having arrived until a month after the capture of Vera Cruz. He would not, however, say any more on that subject, or as to the insult which had been offered to the British flag, except, that if there had been a proper naval force on the Mexican coast, he seriously thought such insult would not have been offered. He was desirous of knowing whether the ships of the squadron now on that coast were still manned with the reduced complements, which were called the peace establishment, for they were in a position liable to be called on at a moment's notice, to vindicate the honour of their flag and to put to sea, and therefore ought to be in a fit state for duty of that kind. As to manning the ships, that was a subject of great importance. Two different pamphlets on the question had appeared from members of the Admiralty, which differed materially in their contents. Of them he would say nothing more, than that it was to be regretted that such controversies had not been kept and confined within the walls of the Admiralty. But, on some parts of this question, difference of opinion might fairly exist—he meant as to ships on the home station—ships strictly confined to home service; and on this he saw no objection to their complement being reduced so long as they were in that state, provided it were done for the purpose of keeping at sea a larger number of vessels. But his opinion was, that no ships, either during the time of peace, or in war, should leave this station without being complete in the number of her men and her other equipments; for they might meet ships of war of other nations, and it would not be fair that they should labour under any disadvantage in that respect. The House had been told that our ships of war would have a new armament; but, not knowing the particulars of this part of the subject, he could not speak of it, though he trusted it would be of advantage. He hoped there would be also an increase to the existing peace establishment. He had just said, that he had no objection to a reduction of the complement of the vessels on the home station, provided it was for the purpose of keeping a greater number of ships at sea; but when they found that there were 2,000 men of the number voted who were never employed at all, as they had heard from the hon. Gentleman opposite, it was to him altogether inexplicable to hear that it was possible that they should have vessels at sea that are so much under-manned. He could not comprehend it, and to him it appeared that the Government were in this respect extremely culpable. With respect to manning the ships in time of peace, which was a very important subject, the difficulty had increased every year since the war. One cause to which he attributed it was, the change in the coasting trade. Most of the coasting trade was now carried on by steam-vessels. [" *No.*"] He could answer for the correctness of the remark, with reference to the ports of Scotland, except the coal trade. There was no doubt that the men in steam vessels should not be taken into calculation, for they were a class of men not fit to be employed in a man-of-war. There were other causes—the withholding of pensions from men serving on board ship was one—which drove men out of the navy, for they would go where they could get wages and pensions at the same time. We should give a pension at the end of fourteen years. The withholding of that pension was a great discouragement to the navy. Many men, he knew, would enter, if they had the prospect of a pension at the end of fourteen years. The coast-guard had been alluded to, but he was not aware of the state of that service. If it were calculated to furnish men for ships of war, it would be desirable to extend the system further, so as to obtain a sufficient number of men to man ships when called for unexpectedly. On the subject of building, he hoped the Admiralty would adopt the recommendation of the right hon. Baronet, the Member for Pembroke (Sir J. Graham), that a certain number of vessels be laid down and launched periodically. With respect to steam-vessels, we were extremely deficient in comparison to other countries. As to converting merchant steam-vessels into men-of-war, it was out of the question; scarcely one in a hundred would answer, and that only at a great expense of money and time. Probably some of our small frigates might be converted into steam-vessels; they were becoming useless, as other countries were building frigates of a larger size. Small 74's could be converted into powerful frigates, and it would be desirable to build larger two-decked ships, so as to compete with other countries. The hon. and gallant Admiral (Adam) and the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Wood) had commented on the pamphlets which had appeared on this subject, and had called them Tory and political pamphlets. He was not aware that any one had been written by persons who held Tory opinions. He had always abstained from opening his mouth on this subject, because he knew that he should be accused of factious and party opposition, though he could venture to say, for that side of the House (the Opposition), that there never had been any factious opposition on the subject. With respect to the pamphlet of the "Flag Officer," it had been handled by the gallant Admiral and the hon. Gentleman with unnecessary severity, and some of the expressions seemed to him to be unwarranted. It was true, that the author of this publication had been in error in his first pamphlet with respect to the number of French ships; but in his second publication, in a note, he had explained the reason of his former error, so that it was hardly fair in the gallant Admiral to characterize the work in the terms he did. He believed every statement in his second publication was substantially correct, and even the pamphlet of the Secretary to the Admiralty corroborated most of his statements. But it should not be forgotten, that there had also been pamphlets published to which the names of the authors were attached. First, there was the pamphlet of Captain Napier, a distinguished officer, whose opinions were well known, and it could not be doubted for a moment, that they were anything but Tory. That gallant officer had often been opposed to a Tory candidate. Next came the pamphlet of Capt. Marryat, and his politics were also known, he also having opposed a Conservative candidate. He, therefore could not be a Conservative. Then came Captain Berkeley, who had been a member of the present Board of Admiralty. There was also Captain Crauford, a young though deserving officer, and who had taken no part in politics, but the whole of whose connections supported the present Administration. The only other of which he had heard was the statement of Sir John Barrow, holding a responsible situation in the Admiralty. How, then, could it be said for a moment, that this sort of opposition was a Conservative or a factious opposition? The hon. Secretary for the Admiralty had stated, that the vote of the present year was greater than that which had been proposed in a former year on a peace establishment. Now, this might be true; but let the House consider the state of the world at the present moment. Let them look around them on all sides, and they could not fail to see the great necessity that existed for keeping up a large force, both naval and military. Let them look at Mexico—let them look at our relations in the East, and they would see, that the present vote was even too small for the urgency of the occasion. This policy, adopted by the hon. Gentlemen opposite, might suit their own purposes; but in order to keep up such a system of policy, they would speedily find, that they must have the command of a great force; and he could not sit down without expressing his regret, that the hon. Gentleman the Secretary of the Admiralty had not come down and asked Parliament for a larger vote, and if he had done so, he for one would have given him his support.

Mr. *Elliott* observed, that when these debates commenced, an attack had been made from Members on the opposite side of the House, upon the side at which he sat. It was stated, that the navy had been reduced by the present Ministry. But now it was said, that this was no party question. He had heard with pleasure a speech from the right hon. Baronet the Member for Pembroke, a speech which was totally devoid of party feeling: he was happy to hear it, for he found by it, that "a change had come over the spirit" of the right hon. Baronet. When listening to that speech, however, he could not help remembering a speech which had been delivered by the right hon. Baronet at Glasgow, and which, if truly reported, was diametrically the opposite of that which had been delivered in this House. Comparing the one with the other, they had occasioned him a great deal of surprise, whatever might be their effect upon those who were more experienced in politics than himself. He should take the liberty of reading the speech to the House. He should read a very small portion of it.

The hon. Member then proceeded to read the extract, as follows:—

"You have been pleased to refer to my official services. It was my good fortune to be enabled largely to reduce the civil expenditure of the navy; but it was my constant, paramount, and anxious endeavour to increase its warlike efficiency—it is in vain that we negociate commercial treaties—it is in vain that we stipulate for the free navigation of the Danube—that on paper we re-open the Black Sea to British commerce—it is in vain that we remonstrate against French blockades in South America, or seek to overawe Russia by military demonstrations in the East, if the British navy be not ready at all times, and in all places, to sustain our greatness, to assert our rights, and to vindicate our maritime supremacy, then, indeed, our glory is departed—our foremost place among the nations of the earth is surrendered without a struggle. I never hesitated to apply to Parliament for large grants for the increase of warlike stores; I added to the vote of seamen and marines; I took effectual measures for the increase of our maritime population by enforcing the law of apprenticeship on board our merchant ships; I asked for money for the preparation of steamers of war; at a large expense I established an uniform system of naval gunnery; and in justice to the House of Commons, I must observe, that I never knew a grant for the naval service refused, which a respectable Minister declared to be necessary. If the fear of an increase of the naval estimates, or of the necessity of imposing new taxes, has misled the Administration into a niggardly supply of the real wants of the navy, they are, indeed, inexcusable, and they have grossly miscalculated the interests and the wishes of this maritime community. Mr. Hume is the great bugbear on those occasions. He himself once reminded us the Roman Capitol was saved by the cackling of a goose: what a melancholy reflection it would be, if in our times the converse was realized, and it were no less true, that the greatest and richest nation in the world was ruined, if not by the cackling of a goose, by the parsimony of empirics. I have seen some attempts to shift on me the responsibility of the present condition of our fleet. This is not the time or place for my justification. But remember nearly five years have elapsed since my measures were entrusted to other hands. Some of them may have been marred by ignorance of my ulterior intentions; others may have been neglected, rescinded, or counteracted by design; but, in justice, do not let me be considered responsible for the present state of the British navy, be it what it may. Believe me in this, as in many other respects, the Administration of Lord Melbourne is not the Administration of Earl Grey."

That speech had been addressed to a large meeting, and he appealed to the House whether it was not a direct attack upon the Admiralty. If it could be read in any other sense, then he was blind to that sense. But now it was said, why indulge in party spirit? That was the view now taken by hon. Gentlemen opposite, and he was very glad of it, because it marked the victory which had been won by the Secretary of the Admiralty. It showed that victory could not possibly be greater, and he wished, while the Secretary for the Admiralty was delivering his speech, that the whole country could have looked down with one eye on the benches opposite, and could have seen the chop fallen countenances of the patriots who sat there. If he rightly understood the hon. Gentleman opposite (Captain Gordon), he declared that those opposite supported the present Government on the estimate, while the Government, supported by that hon. Gentleman, was compelled, by the opposition of Members on the present Government side of the House, to reduce their estimates. Now, he appealed to that hon. Gentleman, what sort of Government must that be which could be driven by an opposition to do that which they believed was not for the good of the country. Some statements had been made to the House which he felt it would be to the advantage of the country to have contradicted at once. The gallant Admiral near him (Sir Edward Codrington), in his laudable desire to see the seamen's condition bettered, had put forward strong statements to show that men-of-war seamen were an oppressed set of persons, and much worse off than merchant seamen. That question, he thought, ought to be set right. Now, the pay of a merchant seaman must ever be better than that of a man-of-war's man, because whatever the naval service gave in the way of wages, the merchant service would give more. Sailors in merchant ships going long voyages, received 24*l.* a-year, while in men-of-war they got but 22*l.* a-year; but then the latter had pensions for wounds, pensions for long service, promotions, and other advantages. They were much better attended to with regard to their health and diet. The course of promotion on board the different classes of vessels in the service, was a strong inducement to men to enter the naval rather than the merchant service, in which promotions could not be looked for. Again, it had been alleged that the extraordinary labour to which seamen in Government ships were subjected in consequence of their being short of hands, operated to deter men from going on board ships of war; but for his own part, he thought this statement was the result of mistake. Was it for a single moment to be supposed that 160 men could not manage "a jackass" frigate, when it was well known that merchant ships of equal magnitude seldom went to sea with more than thirty-five men. It was, no doubt, true that there was a material difference between the two services, but the instance which he had mentioned would, he thought, show the fallacy of the assertion that seamen were anxious to escape from ships of war for merchant vessels on account of the labour. The system of promotions now established was unknown in former times; and while advantages of this kind were held out to men, he felt no fear that any number the service might require would be readily obtained. With respect to punishments, too, a most salutary change had taken place. Formerly men were allowed to be punished while the captain was in a passion, but now no punishment was inflicted without proper inquiry, and until after the lapse of a certain time from the commission of the offence. In this way seamen were protected against injustice, and an end was put to anything like tyranny on the part of officers. It had been said in the course of the discussion, that the men now on board of her Majesty's ships were a very different class of persons from the seamen of former days. This, however, was a fact which he must beg leave to deny, and in proof of his assertion, he would read a statement descriptive of the crew of the Caledonia in 1811, when the ships of the navy were said to be in the highest state of perfection. It appeared that they consisted of English, Irish, Scotch, and natives of almost every country in Europe, together with a native of China. It consisted of 957 men. Of that number were returned 288 seamen, two rope-makers, two sail-makers, two weavers, one soap-boiler, one tallow-chandler, one button-maker, one painter, two calico-printers, one printer, two lawyers. [An *Hon. Member:* Sawyers, you mean.] Yes, sawyers it is. Four wool-combers, one pump-borer, five farmers, and finally, thirteen he did not know what. Such was the crew of the Caledonia in 1811, when the navy was said to be in its prime and palmy state, and what, he begged to ask, would be said if such a list was now produced of a ship's crew sent out, for instance, to the Gulf of Mexico by the present Board of Admiralty. It was not his object to trouble the House with any further observations. His intention in rising was merely to show that the navy was not in that unfavourable condition as had been stated by hon. Members on the opposite side of the House.

Sir *J. Graham* said, it was not his intention, particularly after having drawn so largely on the indulgence of the House on a former evening, now to trespass long upon its attention; but the speech which had been made by the hon. Member who had just sat down, rendered it impossible for him not to address the Committee. The hon. Member had thought fit to comment upon his having abstained from giving a party character to the important subject. It was true he had done so; he had avoided it, feeling that the matter was much too important to be so dealt with, and it had been reserved to the hon. Member to make the present a ridiculous discussion. The hon. Member had talked of tailors, lawyers, and others, forming a ship's company, in a manner, and with a rapidity, which appeared natural to the mode in which he wished to treat the subject before the Committee. He would rather have been guilty of even imparting a party character to the question, than to have been supposed capable of treating it in the manner the hon. Member had chosen to himself. The hon. Member had referred to a speech made by him at Glasgow, and had read a report, which, in the main, was a correct report of that which he had said. On the face of that speech, it was apparent, that he was answering attacks which had previously been made upon him for some time before he delivered that speech, in the newspapers immediately connected with the Government, and generally supposed to be under their control, and in answer to attacks previously made in newspapers opposed to her Majesty's Ministers, it had been distinctly stated, that the state of the navy, whatever might be its deficiencies, was to be attributed to his administration of the affairs of the Admiralty; a discussion which had taken place on the day previous to the delivery of that speech, among the municipal body of Glasgow, as to whether the freedom of that city should be given to him or not, those personal attacks which had been made in the newspapers, were resumed with great acrimony—they were discussed, and terminated in an expression of opinion favourable to his conduct, and highly flattering to his feelings; and, therefore, on the occasion of that speech, he felt not only justified, but he could not avoid touching upon that very topic; and, in touching upon it at all, he begged to ask, if he could possibly have done so with greater caution. He had asserted nothing as to the state of the navy; he had seen various statements which had been made, attacking the prudence and policy of her Majesty's Government with respect to the maintenance of the naval force; but in the country he had no opportunity of testing the accuracy of the reports on which those attacks were founded, and therefore upon the occasion in question, he had stated what the hon. Gentleman had just read, that he was not responsible for the state of the navy then; that five years had elapsed since his responsibility ceased, and the only assertion he had made was, that the Administration of Lord Melbourne was not the Administration of Earl Grey. Was he wrong in the assertion? How many of the Gentlemen who were of the Cabinet of Earl Grey, were now in that of Lord Melbourne. They had been reduced to a small remnant—"Small by degrees, and beautifully less." They had been lessened even since the commencement of the present Session, and, if he were not mistaken, it was not only possible, but probable, that before the end of the Session, the small remnant would be considerably reduced. So much for assertion then. But did he shrink from assertion? If he had abstained from making the matter the subject of party attack, and he was glad he had done so, he was actuated by the feeling, that this was a question of too high importance (though it had been made ridiculous by the hon. Gentleman) to be chosen for the arena for party attack. But while he abstained from anything like a party tone, he had certainly suggested one or two points in which he thought her Majesty's Government had departed from his policy, and upon both of which he thought them wrong. The first point was with respect to the demonstration ships. He admitted, that Sir T. Hardy—an authority to which he would pay every tribute of respect—had approved of the change which had been made by her Majesty's Ministers; yet he must say, he was capable of forming a judgment himself upon the matter, and he thought he should be able to show irresistibly, that though the change might be good as to economy, still, as to promptitude in preparation for sea, it was inferior to the system which he had laid down. His right hon. Friend had alluded to one point which demonstrated the inefficiency of the present system. What said Captain Napier on the point? Captain Napier, whose letters had been referred to, but never dealt with or commented upon by Sir John Barrow in his pamphlet, but on the contrary, letters which had been avoided, and Captain Napier, their author, rewarded (since he wrote them), by receiving the command of a ship—what, he repeated, said Captain Napier, with reference to the demonstration ships. In answer to a speech delivered by Admiral Fleming in Scotland, Captain Napier said, "You, Admiral Fleming, talk of the Russell, the demonstration ships being in that state of forwardness in which Sir James Graham left them. Why, the Russell went to sea in three weeks after she was put in commission—that was in 1835, under a different arrangement; but under the present arrangement he must ask how long had the Ganges been in fitting for sea? Why, three months." It had been said that was not a fair case; he would, therefore, take the Powerful, a ship commanded by Captain Napier himself—an officer of high character, and likely to get his complement of men with promptitude. Why, she had been in commission three months, and had just been able to sail from Sheerness to Portsmouth with 200 men short of her complement. Again, he would take the instance of the Implacable at Plymouth. The Malabar had lately returned from Canada with a full complement, indeed complete in every respect as to officers, marines, and seamen. Her Majesty's Government, anxious to replace the Malabar with as little delay as possible, turned over the ship's company, officers, marines, and men, to the Implacable, then in a forward state of preparation. That had taken place a month ago; the Russell, he had shown, went to sea in three weeks, and yet the Implacable, with a full crew on board, a month ago had not, he believed, yet reached Plymouth Sound. Here the experiment had been tried both with and without a full complement of men, and, therefore, he again repeated the language he had used at Glasgow—that "the Administration of Lord Melbourne was not the Administration of Earl Grey." After what had fallen from him on a former evening, it was with reluctance that he was dragged into the present discussion; but if he might proceed, he would state that on the subject of launching ships, a dangerous and great mistake had been committed by Her Majesty's Government. He stated on the former occasion that during the three years and a half he had presided over the affairs of the Admiralty, that, availing himself of the preparations of his predecessors, he had launched seven sail of the line, three of the largest class of line-of-battle ships and four others, besides leaving three more ready. These were the ships which Her Majesty's Ministers now intended to launch. But was this all? When he entered upon office he found no steam vessels of war. He had five built, and the number of others laid down was nine. Since he left the Admiralty only one other war steam ship had been laid down. The lapse of time, as he had before stated, produced the same consequence with ships as with men. The ships in ordinary required repair, and of these the greater portion were advanced in age. The confirmed considerations of age and repair formed the criterions of the value of ships, and, having left the Admiralty in 1834, ships which then stood in class A would, from the circumstances of age and repair, after a lapse of five years, fall from class A to class C. Not more than one-half of the ships in ordinary, according to the mode of estimating vessels at Lloyd's, were worth two years' purchase. He had pointed out the national importance of the subject, and so far from delaying the matter for a year, he thought the Government ought not to delay it even a single day. The hon. Gentleman the Secretary for the Admiralty had said that a reduction had taken place in the men employed in the dock-yards in 1833, but, as he had retired in 1834, he had no opportunity of testing his own measures as to the remission of one day's labour out of the six. The present Government, it was true, had employed more men, but they had not done more work. They had taken upon them much additional work, but then that was in providing steam-packets for foreign stations. They had, in fact, overwhelmed themselves by the work which they had undertaken, and therefore the additional day which they had gained was not any compensation for the destruction occasioned to those works which were indispensable to the naval service. They were behind with the proper work, and the consequence was, that not only few ships of the line had been thoroughly repaired, that little had been done to them, but that, in short, the line-of-battle ships were now in an alarming condition. The hon. Gentleman had said, that he (Sir James Graham) had not launched as many ships as the present Government; that they had launched double the number of ships. Now, with respect to the Worcester, it was true that he had directed that she should be launched, but kept under cover on a slip at Deptford, which at the time happened not to be wanted. He did this by way of experiment; and even in an economical point of view, he believed the experiment was highly successful. The moment, however, the Government made up their minds that no ships should be launched, that they should be kept under cover on the slips, they were bound to provide additional slips, for if the slips were all full, how was it possible that building could go on? In the present state of the dockyards he should not counsel or sanction such a proceeding, and hence it was that he again asserted that the Government of Lord Grey was not the Government of Lord Melbourne. There were two or three other points which he wished to notice before he sat down. It was most amusing to hear the hon. Gentleman the Secretary of the Admiralty comparing the squadrons in the Western Seas, on the coast of America, with those which existed at the period when his right hon. Friend the Member for Tamworth was at the head of the Government. The hon. Gentleman seemed to forget that at that time no open rebellion had taken place in Canada, the Castle of St. Juan d'Ulloa had not been taken by the French, nor had Vera Cruz been sacked. Then no pretensions had been put forward by the French such as had since marked their conduct with respect to Buenos Ayres, and now extended into the Pacific. It was very well to say now that the Government of his right hon. Friend was wrong in not moving for a larger number of men; but having a distinct recollection of what took place on that occasion, his impression was, that the right hon. Gentleman the Member for

Taunton expressed no regret at the reduction. He now stated, that he did, but no record confirmatory of the fact was to be found; but of course the House was bound to take the statement of the hon Gentleman as the correct one. He certainly had no remembrance of the kind, but he well recollected, that, sitting on the other side of the House, he did not hesitate to express his regret, and he thought he stood alone in the risk of the unpopularity which opposing the reduction as inexpedient was calculated to produce. No attempt had been as yet made to answer the powerful and conclusive speech of his right hon. Friend the Member for Tamworth. The question still remained with regard to the distribution of the force. There were eleven sail of the line in the Mediterranean. That was clearly not a peace establishment, but seemed to evince an apprehension of aggression on the part of some other naval Power. But why leave (on that supposition) our own ports unprovided with adequate means of defence? If they were not afraid of aggression from foreign Powers, why had they eleven sail of the line cruising in the Mediterranean, and why should they at the same time be blind to the dangers which threatened our trade upon the coast of Southern America? As they placed so much reliance on Sir John Barrow's book, why had they not thought it necessary to have a proper force in that direction? He could cite the authority of Lord Chatham, founded on the opinion of Lord Anson, and contained in Sir John's book, that there was a necessity on the part of this country at all times to maintain a powerful squadron on the coast of America. Lord Chatham had said, "that it should be the great objects of the Naval Administration of Great Britain to maintain a powerful western squadron; which in time of peace should be at least respectable, and in war should be formidable; and without which our colonies, our commerce, and our relations generally in that quarter of the globe would be at the mercy of the Bourbons." Lord Chatham added, that "while Lord Anson was at the head of the marine this point had never been neglected." Now, he would ask whether this principle had been at all acted upon by Her Majesty's present Ministers? Had they been at all times prepared with a sufficient squadron for the western seas, or rather had they not allowed the commerce of this country to be placed at the mercy of the House of Bourbon. Acting upon this advice, which was given by Lord Anson to Lord Chatham, he (Sir James Graham) concurred in the necessity of maintaining a strong western squadron. Why had the sending of a proper squadron to the coast of Mexico been disregarded? For this purpose dates were material. In 1838 they had warning of the intention of the French government to send a squadron to the coast of Mexico. This expedition sailed from France in September, and reached the coast of Mexico in November. The fort of Saint Juan d'Ulloa was taken on the 28th of November, and Vera Cruz was sacked on the 4th of December. At this time the British squadron was at Jamaica, and the only vessel left was the Satellite, an eighteen gun brig. The voyage to Jamaica would occupy three weeks, and, conscious of his weakness and the unfair position in which he had been placed, the commander of the Satellite availed himself of the permission which he had to communicate with his admiral, and four days before the arrival of the French squadron left Mexico. Oh! but it was said, that the English Minister was not present. This was true, for the English Minister had not arrived until St. Juan d'Ulloa had been taken and Vera Cruz sacked. Both arrived too late, and on this, his (Sir J. Graham's) case rested. He was really anxious to hear what explanation the Government had to give for having so large a squadron in the Mediterranean, where they apprehended nothing hostile, and leaving Vera Cruz without protection. It was impossible to estimate the value of that part of the world to this country in a commercial point of view. A large amount of British capital had been embarked in the mines in that country, and it was from Vera Cruz that our monetary system, the precious metals, might be said to be drawn. It was to be regretted that British interests had not been properly protected when a French squadron arrived in Mexico; and had the British squadron been present, although they might not have been able to prevent the attack on St. Juan d'Ulloa, they would have prevented Vera Cruz from being attacked. At all events, the pilot never would have been taken out of the Express packet if the British squadron had been on the station. He was told that Lieutenant Croke was the officer in command of the Express; but if he had struck the British colours before there was a necessity for his doing so, the satisfactory way would have been to have placed Lieutenant Croke on his trial the instant he arrived in this country. It was not to be assumed from vague statements that his conduct had been satisfactory; but, if blame attached to him, he should have been put upon his trial, in order that the public might have an opportunity of judging of the evidence. If that course had been pursued, there could be little doubt that the opinion of the public would have been a just and fair one. Having trespassed on their attention so long formerly, he had no intention of speaking had he not felt himself called on to do so; but he could not help remarking that, although hon. Gentlemen opposite came down prepared, he had only referred to Sir John Barrow's book, because it afforded evidence that he had boldly attacked officers who were either absent or had not given their names, and that those who, like Captain Napier, had identified themselves with their publications, had been placed in command of ships.

Viscount *Palmerston* said, that it was not his intention to go into a discussion of all the minute points touched upon by the right hon. Baronet who had just sat down, but, rather, to direct his remarks to the larger questions touched upon by the right hon. Baronet, the Member for Tamworth, and the right hon. Baronet who had last spoken. He thought that the Secretary of the Admiralty had satisfactorily shown that there had been no neglect of British interests in regard to the French operations on the coast of Mexico, as had been imputed to the ministers by the right hon. Baronet. The right hon. Baronet, as it appeared to him, had confounded the date and course of the different events in which France had been engaged in this transaction. The first event in these transactions was the demand through the French consul of certain concessions on the part of the Mexican government, with an intimation, that unless these demands were entirely, and without delay, complied with, the affairs were then to be placed in the hands of the naval officer in command on the station, who would act according to the instructions he had already received. The complaint against the Government was, that we had not a sufficiently commanding force on the station; and certainly it was very true that we had no such force at the time of the blockade. But he had given orders for the appointment to the West-Indian station of as many ships as the protection of the British interests required, and as the means afforded. All that could have been required at that time, was to see that no illegal steps were taken with regard to British vessels in consequence of the blockade; and for this purpose the ships on that station were sufficient. In the course of the summer, however, not obtaining satisfaction, the French government sent a larger force, with fresh proposals, and with contingent orders to have recourse to measures of more active hostility. When intimation was made to her Majesty's Government, they took the resolution of sending an adequate force to the station, though not for the purpose of opposing the operations of the French. Therefore, when the right hon. Baronet said, that this force arrived too late, because it arrived after San Juan d'Ulloa was taken, he must proceed on the assumption that the fleet was to be sent in hostility to the French; for as it came in time to support the negotiations which were carried on, it could not otherwise have come too late. When communications passed between the two governments relative to the sending of the French force under the circumstances against San Juan d'Ulloa, other communications were made by the French government in that friendly spirit which had characterized the intercourse and the relations between the two governments, that even if circumstances compelled the French officer to enter into action, and to attack the fort, there was no intention whatever to retain permanent possession of the fort, or any other portion of the Mexican territory; and that whenever just satisfaction should be given to the French demands, the fort should be restored. He therefore said, that after this assurance it would have been an injustice towards that country, unless we intended to go to war with France, to employ a squadron for the purpose of opposing the operations against San Juan d'Ulloa. But, then, the right hon. Baronet said, that because the squadron had not arrived previous to the attack the British interests had been exposed. Now, he had not heard this statement from any of the parties concerned; he believed that it was not the fact, and that no inconvenience had been suffered by the British interests. Hon. Gentlemen seemed to forget that

San Juan d'Ulloa was only a fort, and that it was not a commercial town. Vera Cruz was not attacked till after an interval of a week. There was quite sufficient time, therefore, for the British interests at Vera Cruz to receive warning; and so effectual was this warning that the British consul was, at the period of the attack, almost the only British resident left in the place; the British had removed themselves, and they had also removed all the property that they chose, and had left the remainder under the protection of the consul. Not only had there been no loss and no inconvenience to British subjects, but our chargé d'affaires at Mexico, and our consul at Vera Cruz, in addition to assisting the British subjects, were enabled, in accordance with the friendly relations existing between the two countries, to take under their protection many of the French residents in Mexico, and had afforded them most effective and valuable assistance. Any person who had heard the statements of hon. Gentlemen opposite, would have imagined that Vera Cruz had been taken by assault, that it had been sacked, and that it had been pillaged, and that a hostile army had carried the place, and that they intended to keep permanent possession. But the crews of the French ships, after landing, only destroyed the fortifications, and after rendering useless the guns, made a tour of the ramparts, and then, having accomplished this, they returned to their ships. And what, in the first instance, did the commanding officer do? Why he sent a detachment to the house of the British consul as a guard or protection, which he thought might be required during the operations which he was about to perform. Therefore, he said, that no inconvenience and that no loss had been suffered by British interests, but, on the contrary, they had been fully protected. The right hon. Baronet opposite supposed, that during the interval between the attack and Mr. Pakenham's arrival, there was no person there sufficiently authorised to do all that could be done, to use his good offices to bring about a reconciliation between the Mexican and the French Governments; but in this the right hon. Baronet was entirely mistaken; for Mr. Pakenham, after a long absence from this country upon a station which was peculiarly trying to the health of an European, had obtained leave to return home; the period of his leave of absence had not expired, when having heard that the French admiral was going out, and that matters assumed a graver character, he (Lord Palmerston) requested Mr. Pakenham to forego the unexpired period of his leave, and to return at once to his station, to which he immediately assented. Before his arrival, however, Mr. Ashburnham, who had carried on the affairs of the mission, had received instructions to endeavour to bring about an arrangement between the Mexicans and the French, and with great ability, with great zeal, and with considerable success, he had exerted himself. to fulfil the instructions which he had received; and with respect to Mr. Pakenham's subsequent arrival, he was bound to say, that he thought that Mr. Pakenham's efforts had a greater probability of being crowned with success after the events which had taken place, than before. Mr. Pakenham having, after his arrival, had a communication with the French, and having afterwards had an interview with General Santa Anna, who was, perhaps, the person of the most influence in Mexico, had determined to repair to the city of Mexico, whither he was about to proceed after the communications which had been so satisfactory with the French admiral and with the Mexican general, whose opinions, no doubt, would have great weight with his government. He humbly conceived, therefore, that the Government, so far from being fairly exposed to censure for the neglect of British interests, had resorted to all the means in their power to protect the British interests, not only in the narrow sense of the term, but also in the largest and highest portion of those interests in reconciling nations that might be at war, and in restoring peace where peace was necessary. With respect to the case of the pilot, the right hon. Baronet, the Member for Tamworth, had treated it in a becoming spirit. When the circumstances were represented by the British Ambassador at Paris to the French minister, the latter expressed great regret at the event; he said that he was without any information from his own admiral, and that the circumstances had only been made known to him by the representation of our Ambassador, and by what he had read in the English papers; but that he was in daily expectation of receiving advices from the French admiral. In regard to the distribution of the naval force, about which so much had been said, he conceived, that this branch of the subject was not one for which, under the circumstances of the times, the Government was justly liable to animadversion or censure. As to the quantity of force which in any given year should be employed, it must vary from year to year, according to the circumstances under which the determination of its amount was to be made. And he readily admitted, that there was a greater force employed in former periods than in later years of peace. The gallant Officer on the other side of the House, who had spoken that evening, had said, that if the Government persevered in their present course of foreign policy, the amount of force already raised would not be sufficient to carry out that policy; and that, in fact, if any hon. Member would move an addition, the proposal should meet with his sincere, his hearty approbation. Therefore, the gallant Officer thought, that Government ought to have better means of carrying out the system of policy in which they were at present embarked. The Government, however, thought that the means were sufficient; but when further means were required, they would be most happy to call for the assistance promised by the hon. and gallant Member. The distribution of our naval force was another question which had been much mooted; and the consideration of this subject divided itself into two parts—the one relating to the protection of our own shores, and the other to the promotion of the interests of this country on foreign stations. Now, the right hon. Baronet seemed to think, that the former system of having eight or ten guardships in our ports at home, was preferable to the present method of having the greater portion employed upon foreign stations; but he thought that the ministerial plan was far best, he thought that, having eight or ten sail in the Mediterranean and eight or ten sail in other stations, instead of having eight or ten sail in our ports, was greatly preferable; for it enabled the sailors and the officers to exercise themselves in their profession, and not to become tainted with the indolence at our own ports. Why, if they had called upon the House to vote for these ships on a home station, it would at once have been said, "Why do you call upon us to vote for defences which are entirely useless; are we not at peace with all the world? did not her Majesty tell us, in her speech from the throne, that 'she continued to receive the most friendly assurances from all foreign powers;' where, then, is the foreign power that can attack us? But if we are to have in peace, an establishment which is to be the nucleus for war, why do you not send your ships on a cruise, why don't you let your sailors acquire practice and experience, and instead of allowing them to live in debauchery in the seaports in England, why do you not allow them to exercise their profession?" Such would be the remarks to which the Government would be subject, and he thought that they were now employing the naval force in a useful manner, and in the best way to promote the public interest. It was complained that ten sail of the Line were in the Mediterranean; but any man who looked at the map of Europe, and who had paid any attention to the events of later times, and the great interests at stake in that part of the world, would see the utility of our force in the Mediterranean. Why, they had been told of the great moral effect which a naval force had; and had we no interests in the Mediterranean which would render it of advantage to the country that we should have there a naval force? If there were any merit, as he agreed there was, in these dispositions, was there not merit in having our ships in that quarter? In the year 1834 we had eight sail of the line there; in 1835 we had six there; in 1836 we had nine; in 1837 we had seven; and in 1838 we had nine; therefore, so far from being to blame for this large force, he feared that it was hardly large enough, and that we had scarcely added sufficiently to the American fleet, considering what had been its amount in the preceding year. It was said that this fleet was of no use, and that if we went to war, we must fetch the ships back, and that if we went to war we should not want a fleet in the Mediterranean. But Gentlemen who talked so much of going to war, meant that we should go to war with Russia, and could we go to war with that power without a squadron in the Mediterranean? and if it was not there, first it would be our duty to send it, and if it were thought that the state of our naval armament required increase at any time on the approach of war, did not hon.

Gentlemen believe that the country would put forth her energies, and even then it would be right to have a squadron in the Mediterranean, for it was obviously much easier to arm a squadron on our own shores than to fit one out, round the Straits of Gibraltar. We had now a force of ten sail of the line in the Mediterranean, and eight or ten sail at such a distance that they could be easily brought to this country if there were a prospect of their being required for its defence. If it were likely that any necessity should occur for an armament in defence of our shores the ships were more usefully employed, not only for the interests of the country, but for the improvement of the navy, where they now were, than if they were lying in the ports in this country. Suppose the case on which the hon. Gentleman's arguments turned—suppose the specific case, which he did not anticipate, of a war with Russia, eight sail of the line would not be sufficient to meet and encounter the twenty-seven sail possessed by Russia; it would be necessary to arm a much larger force. Therefore, if hon. Gentlemen stated that eight or ten sail-of-the-line in this country was amply sufficient to protect this country, then he understood their argument, that no ship should be sent abroad, and that to secure us from all chance of attack the whole should be kept at home; but such was not the case, and we must make a much larger armament before we should be secure from attack, though we should bring back the force which was distributed in different parts. He did not like to touch this part of the subject, lest the possible supposition should be entertained, that in what he said he was giving any countenance to the opinion that had been anywhere stated that a rupture with Russia was likely to arise. There was nothing in the relations between this country and Russia to justify the entertaining of such an opinion; on the contrary, he thought that on both sides there was the greatest desire for the preservation of peaceful relations and continued friendship; but if any question should at any time be likely to arise to endanger the permanence of peace, it would not occur so suddenly that the English Government would have no intimation of the expectancy, or that the House would not sanction any measure which, under any unfortunate, and at present, entirely unforeseen circumstances, might seem to be necessary. Another topic had been introduced. It had been said that Ministers were putting the country to great expense on account of the ships and the marines on the coast of Spain. He would say, however, in the first place, that the expense of the marines being employed there was little more than if they were employed elsewhere. It was not to be expected that hon. Gentlemen who differed from his view of the contest in Spain, that those whose wishes were one way whilst his own were the other, that those who sighed and prayed for the success of Don Carlos, whilst he was anxious for the success of Isabella and constitutional government, should agree with him in this opinion. He would not go into the question with those Gentlemen who could not be weaned from their attachment after the recent dreadful events in the court and camp of Don Carlos, but he thought that this country was interested in the support of the constitutional cause, and that it was our interest to see Spain independent and free. His belief was, that our commercial interest, and what was far more than any sordid interest, our political interest in the balance of power in Europe, was connected with the independence of Spain, and he believed also that the force we had sent there, small though it were, yet placed on the spot which it held, and occupying the position which it maintained, had rendered important service to the Queen and to the constitution of Spain. Though he did not think, therefore, that the expense had been great, he believed that the force had been usefully employed, and that if we should want ships at any time at home, or if we should want marines on any sudden case of war for other ships, we could have them back from Spain before even the ships should be ready to receive them. He must console hon. Gentlemen by reminding them that the distance was not so immense, and that if this small force were wanted for national defence, the country was not so geographically distant that the ships might not be brought home before the exigencies of the country required them. Therefore it was, that he said that there was no ground for calling in question the conduct of her Majesty's Government in not having asked the House for a larger amount of naval force; that he thought the distribution of this force both wise and provident; that no

British interests had been neglected, and that, on the contrary, the most important British interests had been fully and effectually protected.

Sir *G. Clerk* would not pretend to follow the noble Lord who had just sat down through all the topics of his speech. He would enter into no discussion upon his Spanish policy. The noble Lord was mistaken if he thought the cheers on the Opposition side of the House had any reference to the probability of an attack upon our shores. He had cheered the noble Lord because it was unfortunately too true, as that noble Lord had stated, that our ships might arrive from the Mediterranean before those in our ports could be got ready for service. He would not go into the general question why we should have ten sail-of-the-line in the Mediterranean, while the shores of Great Britain were wholly unprotected; but he would recall the attention of the House to a charge made by the right hon. Member for Tamworth, and which had received no answer either from the hon. Secretary of the Admiralty or from the noble Lord who had just sat down. That charge was as to the delay which had taken place before the British Government had sent out to Vera Cruz any force to protect the interests of British subjects, when they were endangered by the French hostilities. Would not the noble Lord admit, that in the summer the quarrel between France and Mexico assumed a totally different character from that which it had before the attack upon San Juan d'Ulloa? Ministers had, in fact, acted on this view of the subject by sending a squadron into the Gulf of Mexico. But this squadron did not arrive there till the 28th of December, which was a month after the attack upon San Juan d'Ulloa, instead of being there, as it ought to have been, at the time of the attack, so as to afford protection to British interests. Therefore the only question really appeared to him to be, at what time had the British Government notice of the intended attack by France? He had no other sources of information but the newspapers; but he would take one which the noble Secretary for Foreign Affairs might be supposed to have seen. It was stated in the *Globe* as long ago as August last, that the French were fitting out a squadron at Toulon, including a considerable number of bomb-vessels, whose destination was Vera Cruz, but it was added that it would be impossible, notwithstanding all the exertions that were making at Toulon, for the force to be at Vera Cruz before the beginning of November. Notwithstanding this intelligence, no instructions were sent out from the Admiralty to Sir Charles Paget till the end of October, although the French squadron sailed on the 13th of September. All the British residents at Vera Cruz were in the greatest consternation, and the officer who was there to protect British interests acted both as French and English Vice-Consul. [Lord *Palmerston.*—By courtesy.]—The noble Lord said by courtesy; but, whatever the nature of the understanding might be, what became of the noble Lord's argument, which he founded on the attention shown by the French Admiral to this consul? If he was the French Consul also, this care for his safety was very natural on the part of the French Admiral, and formed no justification whatever to the noble Lord for having no force in the Gulf of Mexico. As to the outrage upon the British flag in that part of the world, he would not enter into the details of the transaction, but would only express a hope that no unnecessary delay had taken place in communicating with the French Government upon the subject. Then as regarded Russia, he would only advert to a speech which had proceeded from an hon. Member of that House on a former occasion, in which that hon. Member had stated that nine Russian sail-of-the-line had been seen at Cronstadt, while England had only two frigates and a sloop. He was sure that, to call the attention of the Government to that speech, he need only say that it had proceeded from the hon. Secretary to the Admiralty.

Mr. *Curry* thought the state of the navy very inefficient and that the ships were not only too few in number but of an inferior description. He was very well aware, that to restore it to a proper state, and render it sufficiently extensive, even for a peace establishment, would require a very large expenditure; but he was one of those who wished for efficiency first and economy after. They were sent there, no doubt, to protect the public purse, but likewise to protect the nation, and he never would consent, no matter how great might be the saving for the time, to put in jeopardy the safety of the British empire, or the honour of the British flag.

Viscount *Sandon* was not in the House when the noble Lord (Palmerston) had addressed it; but he understood that the noble Lord had stated that the commercial interests of Britain were satisfied with what had been done by the Government regarding the blockade of Mexico. He would appeal to any person acquainted with the commercial interests of the country whether that was the fact. He would appeal likewise to the correspondence with the noble Lord himself, and to the petitions which would be laid on the Table of the House on Wednesday next, from which he thought the contrary would be found to be the fact.

Lord *John Russell* had no wish to trespass on the Committee by prolonging this already protracted debate, but the explanation, or rather the second speech, of the hon. Baronet, the Member for Stamford, rendered it incumbent on him to say a few words. With respect to the question which the noble Lord, the Member for Liverpool, had just raised—namely, the protection of our commercial interests in the Gulf of Mexico, the noble Lord had not stated, that there had been remonstrances made against that blockade, that the commercial interests of the country had been very much aggrieved by it, or had made any great complaints upon the subject. The point he spoke to was the special point upon which the right hon. Baronet had made a statement. The right hon. Baronet complained that there was not a sufficient British force in the Gulf of Mexico to protect British interests until after the capture of St. Jean d'Ulloa and the landing at Vera Cruz. The question was, whether it were the duty of this country to have entered into hostilities with France in order to have prevented that capture. If it was, then indeed would it have been the duty of his noble Friend at the head of the Admiralty to have done every thing that was possible, to have had a British force there in time. Then arose the question, whether any commercial interests had been endangered or injured by the absence of that force during the capture of St. Juan d'Ulloa, or the landing of the French at Vera Cruz. He said that there had not; and, moreover, that in neither instance had there been any danger either to person or property. Therefore, if there was no danger, there was no need of a protecting force. The hon. Baronet had taken advantage of the statement that our consul had for some time been the French consul. Mr. Gifford, to whom the hon. Baronet alluded, was a very intelligent and clever person, and the person to whom, in the absence of the French consul, the interests of the French had been intrusted. Such was the usual course, when the consul of one power was obliged to leave town, to ask the consul of some friendly power to undertake the protection of the interests of individuals which might happen to be put in jeopardy during his absence. Mr. Gifford having been placed in that situation, was, of course, obliged to protect the French interests; but that could not make him be considered, properly speaking, as the consul of both nations. The only thing to be done, however, in that affair, was to see that the hostilities carried on between France and Mexico should not be carried to such an extent as to endanger the permanence of British interests in that part of the world, and to give protection to any negotiations which might be conducted under the influence of British commerce. For these purposes he thought our squadron had been exceedingly useful, and he was happy to think that hostilities between the two powers was not likely to continue. The right hon. Baronet, in alluding to the insult put upon the British flag, by the extraction of a pilot from a British vessel, said, that there should be no delay whatever in demanding an explanation. He knew not how they could expect from the French Government any explanation for the present, of a more satisfactory nature than what had already been received. The French Government said, "We are ready to afford you every explanation; nay, an apology, if required, when the facts are before us;" but, said the right hon. Baronet, "Don't wait for facts." The right hon. Baronet would have the French Government explain in total ignorance of the facts. One word upon the much contested point of having a large fleet in the Mediterranean. Now, it had been shown, that it was not extravagantly large; and when they considered the different powers which possessed naval forces, he thought it might be regarded as being, if anything, too small. It seemed to be quite forgotten, in reference to this subject, that there were two Powers in the Mediterranean having naval forces, Turkey and the Pasha of Egypt; that it was most desirable, not only for the sake of great commercial, but great political interests, to prevent a collision between those two forces, and that the influence of British power and authority should be used, not only for the purpose of preventing any such collision, but likewise of preventing any change in the existing relations between the Sultan and the Pasha. That was one, and he thought a very strong, reason why we should not fail to have rather a large naval force in the Mediterranean.

Mr. *Plumptre* thought it exceedingly wrong that the merchants of this great nation should be left, as it was proved they frequently had been of late years, totally unprotected in different parts of the world. It was scarcely to be wondered at, however, when sufficient protection was withheld even from our own shores.

Mr. *Hume* never heard more extraordinary speeches than had been delivered in the course of the debate on this subject. It seemed to him quite a race of extravagancies. Some hon. Members said, that the merchants were complaining of the want of protection to commerce. He had certainly heard no complaints of the kind. The right hon. Baronet, the Member for Tamworth, was the person who had spoken most on the subject; for him (Mr. Hume) the question was, not whether the navy ought to be increased, but how it was to be paid for. He certainly thought, that the Government of the right hon. Baronet deserved more credit than those Gentlemen whom he had been supporting all this time. The right hon. Baronet had very properly stated, that the financial committee of 1817 had given it, as their opinion, that 19,000 seamen and marines would be sufficient; and Sir J. Colborne had stated, that no more ought to be required during a peace than 16,000. Were we not now at peace? And if so, were those opinions to go for nothing? And was the country to be called on to keep up such a force as upwards of 34,000 men? There was no reason for keeping up so large a force, if it were not that they were continually intermeddling with everybody's business. There was no plea whatever for keeping up so large a force, contrary to the opinion of Sir George Cockburn, and to the opinion of the right hon. Baronet opposite, and contrary to the evidence upon which the force to be kept up was established in 1834 and 1835. To add to the burthens of the people by increasing the force of the country in a time of peace was an act of great imprudence, and he was really sorry that the Administration with a deficient and declining revenue should lend themselves to the extravagant notions which were put forward on both sides of the House. When, however, the report was brought up, he would take that opportunity of calling the attention of the House to the faults and defects which were the causes of that extravagance. He must plead guilty of having long supported the present Government. He had borne with them with great patience, in the hope that they would improve, but they were getting worse and worse every day, and if the right hon. Baronet persevered in reducing the expenditure of the country, he would not find him such an opponent as he had hitherto been. The present Government, and those who urged them into measures for increasing the force of the country, did not calculate the cost; but he would not then detain the Committee by entering further into the subject, and should content himself with protesting against any increase of expenditure, as there was no necessity for increasing the force of the country beyond what it was ten years ago.

Sir *J. R. Reid* could, with truth, say, that there was but one feeling amongst the merchants as to the course pursued by the present Administration. The merchants, one and all, complained of want of protection, and he could assure the House, that that there was a material falling off in their trade in consequence of their interests not being attended to as they ought to be by the Government. Many ships had actually returned from Mexico with their cargoes on board, and the complaint was universal, that the mercantile interests of the country were neither properly protected nor attended to. He should, however, follow the example of the noble Lord, the Member for Liverpool, and should avail himself of another opportunity of calling the attention of the House to this most important subject.

Mr. *Woverly Attwood* said, that in the course of the debate allusion had been made to the shipwrights, and he thought it highly important, that the complement of men in the dockyards should be increased, and that the dockyards should be maintained in a state of the greatest efficiency. He would avail himself of another opportunity to go into details, and would show, that the compensation given to the shipwrights was inferior to what was given in the yards of merchants, and that in consequence it was impossible for the country to obtain the services of the best class of workmen. In reference to the general question, he had but one observation to make, and it was this—the people had freely expressed their opinions of the necessity of an increase in the naval force of the country, and that House had expressed similar sentiments, so that it would be impossible for the Administration to urge hereafter, that they had been restrained, and that economy had been forced upon them, contrary to their own opinions. The House had shown, that it was willing to increase the expenditure when the necessity for that increase had been demonstrated, and the Government could not say, that they had been restrained either by public opinion or by the opposition of the Members of that House from making such an increase in the naval force as the state of the country required. He was not an advocate for increasing the public expenditure if such a course could be avoided, but he should never withhold his support to such an increase as the interests of the country required.

Mr. *Warburton* said, it seemed to him that the people were tired of peace, for they now heard of nothing but increasing the force of the country, and nothing was said of the oppression of taxation. But was not the country already taxed enough, and why had no hon. Member risen to defeat the clamour which had been raised about the large fleets of their neighbours? He trusted, that the hon. Member for Kilkenny, and all those who felt as he did, would avail themselves of a future opportunity of expressing their sentiments against the policy of increasing the force of the country in a time of peace.

Captain *Boldero* had before called the attention of the House to the condition of the marines. He had shown, that two years of service on shore were only counted as one afloat, when their claims to a pension were to be considered. Now, that was certainly most unjust, and such a system ought at once to be put an end to. He did not grudge Ministers their salaries, but he should like to know how they would feel were he to move a resolution, that they should be placed upon half-pay during the recess. Now, that was exactly the condition in which they had placed the marines, and such a system could only be productive of discontent, and if the rule establishing such a system was not rescinded, he should again bring the subject forward, and take the sense of the House upon it. He had a word or two to say on the subject of great coats. He was glad to see the hon. Member for Sandwich in his place, as the hon. and gallant Member had before said, that the marines were entirely under his inspection. The army received great coats once every three years, and if the service required it, once every two years, and for those great coats the soldiers had not one farthing to pay. But it was different with the marines, for the marines were obliged to pay 25*s*. for their great coats. Now, he wanted a reason for the distinction made between the soldier and the marine. He should not, however, enter further upon the subject at that time, but would again call the attention of the House to the inequalities which existed in the two branches of the service when the report of the Committee was brought up.

Sir *T. Troubridge* having been so pointedly alluded to by the hon. and gallant Member who had last addressed the House, felt it necessary to say, that he had nothing to do with the great coats of the marines. The rule respecting great coats had existed for fifty or sixty years.

Vote agreed to. Also, a vote for 1,800,089*l*. for defraying the expenses of seamen and marines. And a vote of 546,655*l*. for victualling the seamen and marines in the ordinary and guard departments.

The House resumed. Committee to sit again.

IRISH OUTRAGES—ADJOURNED DEBATE.] Dr. *Lefroy* moved, that the adjourned debate on the Irish outrages be resumed. He said, that it might be irksome to resume this debate at so late an hour; but, on the former evening, when he was in possession of the House, he had waved his privilege on the understanding that he should have an opportunity on the present occasion of replying to certain charges which had been made by the hon. and learned Member for Dublin against persons in whom he felt the deepest interest. He felt called upon to draw the attention of the House at the earliest possible period to the charges which had been made by the hon. and learned Gentleman, the Member for Dublin, against a noble Lord and his agent relative to the management of that noble Lord's estates in the county of Longford. He regretted the absence of the hon. and learned Gentleman who had made those charges, but he had given him notice of his intention, and it was, therefore, no fault of his that the hon. and learned Gentleman was now absent. The statement which the hon. and learned Gentleman had made was, that the disturbances in Longford were owing to the conduct of Lord Lorton and his agent in the management of his estates, and the hon. and learned Gentleman had read an extract from a newspaper as a proof that oppression was practised by his Lordship. The hon. Member had also said, that his statement was not made upon his own responsibility, as he had taken the facts from the public papers; but when he recollected what had actually taken place, he contended, that he was entitled to fix the whole responsibility of the statement on the hon. and learned Gentleman. The hon. and learned Gentleman had given his own facts, and had quoted the statements of counsel, which were necessarily of an *ex parte* character, in support of his arguments, and he had then concluded by saying, "Here is Lord Lorton for you, and here is the cause of the disturbances of Longford." Now, after such observations, he contended, that the hon. and learned Gentleman could not shake off the responsibility of the statement he had made. But was that statement correct? He would call the attention of the House to evidence of the most satisfactory kind in regard to the management of the estates of Lord Lorton in the county of Longford—evidence with which the hon. and learned Member for Dublin was fully acquainted, and which ought to have made him the last man to bring forward such a charge. He alluded to the evidence taken before the Fictitious Votes Committee in June last, of which committee the hon. and learned Member for Dublin was a member. Lord Lorton's agent appeared before that committee for the purpose of ascertaining the state of the registry in the county of Longford, and he had been examined and cross-examined by the hon. and learned Member for Dublin in regard to the management of Lord Lorton's estates for the three previous years. At the conclusion of that examination the hon. and learned Member complimented the agent on the mode in which he had given his evidence, and said that the evidence had been given with the utmost fairness and impartiality. To a few of the answers given he now wished to call the attention of the House; but he would observe, in the first place, that the objection was, that Lord Lorton, from a principle of bigotry, had been ejecting the Roman Catholics from his estates and turning them off without the means of subsistence. One of the questions put to the agent was whether he had known Roman Catholics turned off from the estates of Lord Lorton in order to bring in Protestants in their room? To that the reply was, that he had known Roman Catholics turned off, but it was under these circumstances—they were turned off at the expiration of a lease of a townland which had become covered with paupers, but a selection from the better part of the Roman Catholics had been allowed to remain. Though one Protestant was introduced, that addition to the tenantry was not intended to have the effect of excluding any Roman Catholics. Lord Lorton's agent, examined before a committee of that House, expressly declaring, that where tenants earned the confidence of Lord Lorton by good conduct they were not exposed to the least chance of removal, and above all, there was no exclusion whatever on the ground of religion. The only Protestant introduced upon the estate in question was a man of the name of Block, who came from the north for the purpose of improving the state of agriculture in that district, and especially with a view to the cultivation of flax and the establishment of the linen manufacture, and he only got two or three acres; none of the tenants were put off by ejectment, every man of them retired voluntarily, and every family was furnished with the means of going to America, if they thought fitting so to do; yet from the evidence of Lord Lorton's agent, examined by the hon. and learned Member, it distinctly appeared, that two murders were committed upon the estates of Lord Lorton within the short period of three months, and, he believed, four within nine months; so much for the evidence before the committee. He was enabled, from statements on which he could fully rely, and, indeed, from other parts of the report besides that which he had read, to state, that the property in question, now belonging to Lord Lorton, formed no part of his hereditary possessions. Towards the latter end of the last century it had been purchased by some member of Lord Lorton's family. His Lordship's object was to weed the property of the bad tenants, and the crowded population which the injudicious management of his predecessors had allowed to overrun the land. He wished further to introduce there an improved system of agriculture, especially he desired to introduce the cultivation of flax and the linen manufacture. The land, previously to Lord Lorton's occupation of it, had been crowded with middlemen, who had under them a wretched pauper tenantry, whose condition, if not interfered with, precluded all hope of improvement. Following up, then, his intention of effecting some amelioration, his noble Friend introduced one single tenant from the north, who was of the Protestant religion, and the measure of giving him a residence on the estate, so far from being intended as any act of hostility against the Roman Catholics, was resorted to with no other purpose than that of promoting the cultivation of flax. The unfortunate man was murdered within one month from the time of his arrival. He lived near the village of Ballinamuck; he was murdered at noonday, in the presence of his wife, who, when she was examined as a witness on the trial of the murderers, stated, that seeing her husband killed, she fled into the village to the police-station for protection—that the village was crowded with persons who were tenants on Lord Lorton's estates, and that when she came into Ballinamuck, screaming under the influence of terror and affliction, they scoffed at her, instead of paying the least attention to her entreaties for assistance. Not a man in the crowd was there to feel for or to sympathize with the affliction of this wretched widow. Was it then to be wondered at that Lord Lorton should desire to clear such characters off his estates? But even of those, much as their conduct was to be condemned, not a man was removed otherwise than by purchase; every family was furnished with funds sufficient to convey them to America. The tenantry upon that estate were called together; their attention was directed to the condition of the property; it was shown to them that there was no possibility of so crowded a population continuing to exist upon so limited an extent of land. The plan for their relief, and for the improvement of the property which Lord Lorton proposed, was in its outline at least, communicated to them; those whom it was proposed to buy out were offered some *5l.*, some *10l.*, *15l.*, and even some *20l.* These offers the several parties to whom they were made readily accepted and voluntarily signed a paper, declaring that acceptance, setting forth the sums they had received, promising a surrender of their holdings, expressing their thanks for the kind and liberal treatment they had experienced, and professing to be perfectly satisfied with the arrangement made for their advantage. Now he would ask was that House to be told that landlords were to make no improvements on their estates? Did the proceedings of Lord Lorton include some of the prohibited rights which landlords were no longer to exercise? Were they to look for the prohibition of these measures in the new edition of Captain Rock's code? Did he prohibit this species of improvement, as he did many others? But, be that as it might, of this at least he could assure the House, that the improvements which Lord Lorton effected in his estate were carried on without the least reference to the religious sentiments of the tenants whose cases those improvements affected. He fearlessly appealed to the hon. Member opposite who represented the county in which Lord Lorton resided, to say if he knew in any quarter of the country a better landlord than his noble Friend. It was perfectly well known that Lord Lorton never advertised any of his lands with the view of letting them at a rack rent, and there was no instance of his tenants voting at an election contrary to his wishes. [*Cheers.*] He perfectly understood that cheer, and he desired to ask the House whether they did not think it infinitely better that a body of tenantry should vote at the suggestion of a benevolent landlord than at the dictation of a domineering priest. The one was a natural source of influence—it was a natural relation, but the dictation and domination of an ecclesiastic—the threats of punishment in a future state, were a wholly different matter, and in his judgment could be neither justified nor even palliated. Again he would say that no more exemplary landlord existed than Lord Lorton; he maintained medical men at his own expense, he maintained schools for the education of the children of his tenantry, he paid annually 5,000*l.* or 6,000*l.* a year to labourers on his estates, and he kept upwards of 300 men in his employment. When he heard the charges made against his noble Friend he instantly wrote for information; but even in due course of post he could not to-day have received a reply; nevertheless, though not furnished with specific answers, he thought that with nothing but the circumstances already before the House he could expose the injustice of the accusation preferred against Lord Lorton in the particular case brought forward by the hon. and learned Member for Dublin. In his opinion it was plain from the document itself that there was not the least ground for the accusation, although the circumstances were stated in a manner most adverse to his noble Friend. The hon. and learned Gentleman read the statement already published [see ante p. 114] respecting the case of the widow Murphy, and observed that from this statement it clearly appeared that the son, acting on behalf of his mother, had signed an agreement to surrender the premises held by her, and that a sufficient consideration was to be paid for such surrender. When the proper time came, possession was delivered up, and to prevent the possibility of resumption on the part of the Murphys the roof was taken off the House. The widow and her daughter got in again, and from the scattered materials raised a hut, in which they resided, and this they did in utter disregard of the compact made for the surrender, according to which they were to receive a sum of money, and something in the way of an annuity. The agreement for a surrender constituted, in his opinion, a good equitable title, and he would appeal to any professional Member of that House on the soundness of that opinion. If the house had been pulled down upon the head of the widow and her daughter without any previous agreement, he should consider it a most unjustifiable act of barbarity, but he affirmed that nothing of the sort had been done. When they went back and took possession of the ruins there was no attempt to dislodge them, quite the contrary. It had been stated that there existed a lease. At the time that the Murphys agreed to give up the premises there was no notice whatever of the lease; the existence of such a lease was unknown to Lord Lorton's agent; a note in writing would have been a sufficient surrender of that lease, which was a mere chattel interest, created by the party from whom Lord Lorton's relative purchased the property; there could therefore be no doubt that the lease was kept back for the purposes of fraud, and he had no doubt that a court of equity would have regarded the whole as a most iniquitous proceeding. No man who looked at the case could for a moment imagine that the action of ejectment would have been brought if Lord Lorton's agent had known of the lease. Let him call the attention of the House to the way in which the hon. and learned Member had stated his case, and the way in which it had gone forth to the public. The hon. Member had stated that the widow had a lease of which forty years were unexpired. Now there was not one tittle of evidence to support such an averment. He had heard every word of the statement to which the hon. and learned Member had referred, and there was not a word in it of forty years being unexpired. The hon. and learned Member had said, that the widow was required to give up her lease, and refused, but there was not one *scintilla* of evidence to that effect. The next statement of the hon. and learned Member was, that the landlord took a party to tear down the house. The landlord was not there, nor did he take any party, and it was not alleged in the statement that he was present. The evidence was, that the agent of Lord Lorton was there, and that there was no party. But the hon. and learned Member went on to say, that the widow and her daughter were borne away, weeping and screaming, and that the son at last signed a paper which he was assured would prevent his mother's house from being levelled with the ground. The son signed this at last! It was in the first instance, that the paper was signed, before a hand was laid to the house. But the son was assured, that his signature would prevent his mother's house from being levelled with the ground. No such assurance was given. But then the hon. and learned Member quoted the speech of the counsel employed against Lord Lorton. He admitted, that there was no variation in the speech of the counsel, but of course, that speech was given with all the partiality of representation which might be expected from one who had received his instructions from one party instead of both. But, notwithstanding, with this speech the hon. and learned Member concluded his remarks, saying, "There is Lord Lorton for you, and there is the cause of the disturbances in Longford." They might make the most of what had really happened, when here was but one solitary instance which could be cited, and that owing to the blunder of an agent who had taken a surrender of possession when he might as easily have obtained a surrender of the lease. He trusted, under the circumstances in which he stood, not being in a condition to obtain by any possibility any answer from Ireland in respect to this charge, that Lord Lorton would meet with that fair allowance, that might be expected to be made towards a person whose generous conduct to his tenants was not easily equalled, and that the House would not be guilty of the injustice of imputing to him what had been imputed to him by the hon. and learned Member.

Mr. *French* in reply to the call which had been made on him by the right hon. Gentleman who had just sat down, stated, that although from political differences he did not even exchange the courtesy of a salute with the noble Lord, he could not as a matter of justice refuse to declare, that as a landlord, as a country gentleman, as a charitable, upright, and honourable man, Lord Lorton had not in that or any other country a superior. Since he (Mr. French) had had the honour of a seat in that House, he had purposely abstained from mixing in party debates, but as he was on his legs he trusted he should be excused for making a few observations on the subject then before them, if, indeed, his noble Friend the Secretary for Ireland had left anything to be said on it. Outrage in Ireland had been almost universally of an agrarian character, a fact that was shown by every writer on the subject from Primate Boulton in 1727, to the Commissioners of Poor Inquiry who were appointed in 1834. The class employing labourers in Ireland was comparatively small, and efforts to obtain constant employment, even at the lowest rate of wages, were seldom succesful. The possession of a portion of land was until the passing of the Poor-law bill the sole defence of the peasantry against utter destitution, and they naturally clung to it with the greatest tenacity. The competition for land was like the struggle of drowning men for the single plank which was between them and destruction, and actuated by the one overpowering influence of self-preservation, they were equally regardless of the injustice to others by which it might be worked or maintained; such was, he contended, the history of the agrarian outrages of Ireland. It was clearly shown before the Poor Inquiry Commissioners, that it required privations little short of destitution, or the approach of destitution itself, to urge the people to crime, and many proofs were given of their great submission and patient endurance under the most afflicting distress. He, however, fully agreed with his right hon. Friend by whom the motion had been brought forward, that the state of the peasantry of Ireland was not what it should be, and with him he deeply lamented their familiarity with scenes of violence and bloodshed, and their tendency to avenge, through combination, their private wrongs, all which must lead to the formation of reckless habits, and an utter disregard of the law. But he entirely differed with him as to the causes which had produced the circumstances they equally deplored. The House had in the earlier part of the debate heard much of the ferocity of the Irish peasantry; but the picture was an overcharged one; nowhere was the social virtues more prevalent than amongst them; the dark features in their character were the result of circumstances for which they were not answerable. The Irish peasant might be as had been stated, reckless of legal obligations, and regardless of social observances, for he had found the law was not his friend, and from society he had derived no advantages. Ejected from his miserable cabin, if a farm was to be consolidated, without a prospect of provision for his starving family, he might be told he had nothing to complain of—that everything had been done according to law. Possibly it might have been, possibly it might not have been so; but would famine be less wasting because the law had been satisfied? Was it to be wondered at, however it might be deplored, that the outcast tenantry should enter into combinations, when despair was their bond of union, and the pangs of hunger their sharp incentive to vindicate the great law of nature against that of the statute-book?

How could the *lex scripta* be enforced, when it was opposed to that so eloquently described by Cicero, the "*lex non scripta sed natas, quam non didicimus sed ex ipsa natura transimus, ad quam non docti sed facti sumus.*" Now, he would ask under circumstances such as these, under clearances of estates, scenes disgraceful to the country and which had been so ably described by the late Mr. Sadler, could it be a matter of surprise, that the code of Captain Rock should have superseded that of the Queen? They had also heard much of the little regard of the peasantry of Ireland for the rights of property; but even at the hazard of offending hon. Gentlemen opposite, he would ask, with Mr. Drummond, had property no reciprocal obligations for the protection afforded it by the law? Did it not owe in its turn, protection against destitution to those by whose labour all property was created, and had property in Ireland discharged its obligations to the poor? Was it not a fact, that during the last fifty years the rental of that country had more than trebled, whilst the poverty of the cultivator of the soil had increased? Let them read the description of the present state of the Irish poor furnished by the Commissioners of the Poor-law Inquiry, and contrast it with that given by Arthur Young in 1776 and 1779, and they would find, that their condition had considerably deteriorated. It was also, he regretted to say, proved by the more frequent recurrence of fever and famine amongst them. So far from the Irish peasant being savage, he was convinced, that the English labourer would not have submitted to half the privations he had suffered without displaying far greater violence. History showed them, that when the population of this country were undergoing the same state of transition in which the people of Ireland at present were, they were guilty of far greater excesses. In a paper in *Strype's Annals,* written by a magistrate of Somersetshire, they would find that in one year (1596) in that single county, forty persons had been executed for felony, thirty-five burnt in the hand, thirty-seven whipped, 183 discharged; and that, notwithstanding the great number of indictments, not one-fifth of the felonies committed were brought to trial. What, he would ask, was the state of Ireland, bad as it might be, compared to this? Banded societies of desperate men loose on society in England were restored to order by the passing of the Poor-law Bill in the reign of Elizabeth, after all other means for the suppressing of tumult which the most arbitrary laws and the most cruel executive could devise or accomplish had been tried in vain. The Poor-law of Elizabeth, combined with an extensive system of public works, repressed outrage, and was followed by the greatest improvement in the condition, habits, and intelligence of the people. Like causes would, he trusted, produce like effects in Ireland, and for this consummation they would be indebted to her Majesty's present Government. They had given Ireland a Poor-law, and were about to introduce measures of great practical benefit to that country; nor should it be forgotten that by their means a system of governing by and for a party had been relinquished, and oppression, sanctioned under the sacred name of law and religion, had given way to the paternal policy of promoting the best interests of all classes of the people. They had made justice their rule of action, and were amply repaid by that homage which justice had ever commanded from the Irish people. It was true they had not been able to redress the accumulated wrongs of centuries during their short tenure of office, nor bring the former recipients of power to acknowledge that their own true interests were best promoted by making equal and impartial justice and a perfect community of civil right the basis of Government. But he was entering on this subject further than he desired or intended. The matter in dispute was the conduct of Government. This might be an English, might be a Scotch question, but could hardly be considered an Irish one. The Lord-lieutenant was English, the Chief-secretary was English, the Under-secretary was Scotch, the Archbishop of Dublin was English, the head of the constabulary was Scotch; the Poor-law Commission, the head of the coast guard, the head of the Treasury, the chief Commissioners of Public Works, all were English. In fact, the head of every department in Ireland was either English or Scotch, and he did not feel as an Irish Member, that he was called on to stand forward in their defence, nor should he have interfered in the debate had it not been for the call made on him by the right hon. Gentleman opposite. He was not desirous of continuing this debate, as he felt it was the duty of every Irishman to bury in oblivion the memory of those wretched feuds which had been a disgrace and discredit to that country.

Colonel *Verner* said, that the hon. and learned Member for Dublin had dared any Member to show that the Irish Government had acted unfairly in regard to prosecutions. The noble Lord, the Secretary for Ireland, had also expressed his satisfaction at the vigilance and activity of the professional gentlemen who were employed on the part of the Crown. He had never doubted their vigilance or activity. On the contrary, he thought that in many instances they had shown too great a degree of vigilance and activity, but he did doubt their impartiality. In answer to the hon. and learned Member he would state a case which had come within his own knowledge. An inoffensive young man had been murdered not long since in the streets of Armagh. His crime was assisting to chair the individual now before them, and shouting for Verner. It appeared in evidence, that while the murder was perpetrating, his murderers said, "You shall never assist in chairing Colonel Verner again." Now, what was the conduct of the Crown upon their trial? All the respectable people in Armagh who were in the habit of acting upon petty juries were set aside, and a packed jury was obtained. The announcement of the verdict, which of course was one of acquittal, was received by the mob with shouts of "Down with Verner," and "To hell with Jones." The riot raised was permitted to continue till morning, and neither the magistrates nor the police made any attempt at interference. Thus much for this case. He had also received a letter from a most respectable person in Armagh, who stated, that in twenty-two months no less than fifty-three persons in the county gaol had had their punishments remitted either wholly or in part, and one man who was sentenced to be hanged, and the day of his execution fixed, was turned out of the gaol under the orders of the Lord-lieutenant. And yet this man had been guilty of a cold-blooded murder without any provocation! Without any provocation did he say? Oh, yes, there was provocation; for the murdered man was a yeoman, the son of a yeomanry officer, a Protestant, and, what was, perhaps, provocation more than all, a supporter of Colonel Verner. He had asked the noble Lord, the Secretary for Ireland, some time since, respecting his knowledge of the existence of Riband societies in that country. The substance of the noble Lord's reply was, that no information respecting the existence of such societies had come either to his knowledge, or to that of the Irish Government. He was surprised at receiving that reply, especially after he had read a speech of the hon. and learned Member for Dublin, stating that he had been instrumental in putting down more than forty of those societies, and after he had seen a statement, declaring that prosecutions had been instituted by the Crown against members of these societies in Westmeath, Roscommon, and several other counties in Ireland. He had also seen the affidavit of a policeman, deposing to the fact of having met a large body of them going about armed at night, regularly trained and disciplined, to the great terror of her Majesty's loyal and peaceable subjects. He contended that it was the duty of her Majesty's Government, at all hazards, to put down these societies, and insisted that her Majesty's Government, in not dealing severely with them, had been guilty of a breach of faith towards himself and other leading members of the Orange Association. The House would perhaps recollect, that at the close of the debate on that Association he had asked the noble Lord, whether if we dissolved it, Government would put down all other political societies in Ireland, and to that question the noble Lord had given a reply in the affirmative. The members of the Orange societies had thereupon come forward, in accordance with those principles of loyalty on which they had always acted, and, in obedience to the orders of their sovereign, had dissolved their different lodges. Scarcely had they done that, when the Roman Catholics formed other societies, in which they denounced the connexion between England and Ireland, the Established Church, and the Protestant religion. The Government not only sanctioned, but encouraged the principle of these societies, better known by the name of the General Association. He asserted that the Government encouraged that Association, and his proof of that assertion was the notorious fact that it had promoted some of its most prominent members to offices of great trust and emolument. For some reason or other which he should not pretend to conjecture, the hon. and learned Member had dissolved that Association; but immediately afterwards another, the same in everything but the name, had risen up in its stead. The noble Lord (Morpeth) had pointed out the danger of these political associations, but as the noble Lord had confined his efforts to mere words, he had deceived the Orangemen whom he had induced to relinquish their societies upon false pretences. The Government was much to blame for the mode in which they had interfered with the processions of the Protestant population, under the pretext of expediency and conciliation; and he could but speak in terms of great indignation to the conduct of a police officer, of the name of Duff, who had recommended the magistrates to make a lane with a piece of artillery through some Protestants who were marching in procession through the town of Charlemont. The magistrates were, however, too humane to act upon his recommendation. But what was the consequence? His advice came under the consideration of the authorities in Dublin, and from a police officer he was promoted to the situation of a police magistrate. On the very next 12th of July he was sent down to Dungannon, with the full power of giving such an order as he had before recommended to the magistrates, and of executing that order himself if need arose. Mr. Duff was allowed, however, to leave the town in peace; but, as if to try the patience of the people, he was sent down again the next 12th of July, to prevent the people from walking in procession, and from performing the ceremonies to which they had been long accustomed. This led to much irritation, and created an impression in the neighbourhood, that the Government was resolved to abandon the Protestants to the tender mercies of their Roman Catholic fellow-countrymen.

Sir *C. Style* rose, and was maintaining that under former Administrations there was less security for property than now existed in Ireland, when the House was counted out.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Tuesday, March 12, 1839.

MINUTES.] Petitions presented. By Lord LYNDHURST, the Marquess of ANGLESEY, the Duke of RICHMOND, the Earls of MOUNTCASHEL, and STANHOPE, Lord REDESDALE, the Marquess of BUTE, and two other noble LORDS, from a number of places, against the Repeal of the Corn-laws.—By Lord BROUGHAM, and the Earl of GOSFORD, for the Repeal of the Corn-laws.—By Viscount MELVILLE, and the Earl of GALLOWAY, from three places, for Church Extension in Scotland.

CHURCH EXTENSION, (SCOTLAND).] The Earl of *Galloway* begged to ask the noble Viscount at the head of her Majesty's Government, whether he would redeem the pledge which, though certainly not stated in words, was implied in the appointment of the commission to inquire into the state of church accommodation in Scotland, by bringing forward any proposition to meet the prayer of the numerous body of petitioners who had addressed their Lordships on this important national question.

Viscount *Melbourne:* I cannot admit that any pledge was expressed.

The Earl of *Galloway:* Not expressed, but implied.

Viscount *Melbourne:* Nor implied by the appointment of a commission; and I beg to say, that there is no intention at present, on the part of her Majesty's Government, to propose any grant upon the subject.

The Earl of *Galloway* was grieved to hear that answer made by the noble Viscount, and he was quite sure that the people of Scotland would greatly grieve to hear it, and that an impartial posterity would pass judgment upon the economy of the present day, which could squander thousands of the public money on useless expeditions to the coasts of Portugal and Spain, and throw millions into the laps of the agitators of Ireland, whilst the best interests of the community, their moral and religious instruction, were neglected, and left without support.

Lord *Brougham*: As to throwing millions into the laps of the Irish agitators, in that the noble Earl is rather premature. It is not done yet. There must be a vote of this House, as well as of the other House of Parliament, before that can be accomplished. The noble and learned Lord then presented a petition from Bridgewater, and several other places, praying for a free trade in corn. The petition from Bridgewater was signed by 1,100 persons, and coming, as it did, from a purely agricultural district, he thought it might be taken as a test of the real feeling that existed upon this subject among the more intelligent portion of the agricultural population throughout the country.

Corn Laws.] The Duke of *Richmond* said, he had forty-eight petitions to present from various parts of England and Scotland, against the repeal of the corn-laws. His noble Friend thought it satisfactory, on his side of the question, that he had produced a petition from a few hundreds of agriculturists for a repeal of these laws; but he would ask his noble Friend to set off the petition from the town of Glasgow with the resolution passed by the Chamber of Commerce there, against the petition from the neighbourhood of Bridgewater.

Lord *Brougham* said, he should like to see, as a curiosity, a copy of the resolution of which his noble Friend had spoken. It must be a very extraordinary document. He thought there must be some mistake about it.

The Duke of *Richmond* would read, what he had received from a gentleman living in the city of Glasgow. It was a resolution passed on the 16th of January, 1839, in answer to a requisition presented to the Chamber of Commerce, and was to this effect:—

> "Resolved, that it is the unanimous opinion of this Chamber, after full discussion, that the abolition of the Corn-laws at this time would be impolitic and inexpedient—involving, as such a measure, in order to be a measure of justice, necessarily would, corresponding measures on the part of the Legislature—such as the abolition of all protecting duties on foreign manufactures—an equal adjustment of all local burdens, with a general revision of the existing system of taxation and currency; but, if the requisitionists will condescend to state the nature of the alteration they require, and the reasons upon which it is founded, the Chamber will be prepared to take the subject into further consideration."

Now, with that resolution of theChamber of Commerce he (the Duke of Richmond) entirely and completely concurred. He did not object to a free trade in corn, but what he said was this: "If you have a free trade in corn, you must also have a free trade in every thing else. You have no right to take off the protection which is now given to land, if you do not allow me to get my coat as cheap as I can. You must next take off the malt-tax, and all taxes that now press unfairly upon agriculture."

Lord *Brougham* said, there never was a person whom he was more proud to have for a convert than his noble and excellent Friend. Instead of being opposed to each other, he was now happy to find that he and his noble Friend were entirely on the same side. His noble Friend had spoken exactly in the same sense in which he had always spoken upon the subject of the Corn-laws. His argument had always been, that if they took off any protection at all, they must take off all protection—from every class—from merchants, traders, and others, as far as the public faith would allow; and they must take off the burdens which press upon the agriculturists also. With respect to the resolution which had been read, he could not help thinking his noble Friend had been imposed upon. It could not possibly be said, in a resolution, that "it is the unanimous opinion of the Chamber," because, until the resolution were put, it could not be known whether it was the unanimous opinion or not." It must have been a draft of an intended resolution to be proposed to meet the requisitionists, and not the resolution of a great meeting. This appeared from the conclusion of the document itself, which stated that the question was to be taken into further consideration: it was not therefore the expression of a final opinion.

The Duke of *Richmond* said, the circumstance, he understood, was this:—A certain set of gentlemen in Glasgow, who called themselves Corn-law agitators, had called upon the Chamber of Commerce to appoint a meeting upon the subject of repealing the Corn-laws; and this resolution was in answer to that requisition. But he begged not to be supposed a convert to his noble Friend's views upon this question, unless his noble Friend became a convert to the views which he (the Duke of Richmond) entertained respecting it. What he, in brief, would say was this; "If you take off all the taxes that now press upon the agriculture of this country, then we can compete with the farmers of other countries; but if you do not take off those taxes, we cannot compete with foreigners." Before he sat down, he wished to call the attention of the noble Viscount to the circumstance, that, at the end of the last Session, an objection was made to a customs bill, in which the duty on foreign fruit had been taken off; and on the bill being allowed to pass, the noble Viscount stated, that, early this Session, he should repeal that part of the bill relating to the duty on foreign fruits. He gave notice, that, on Wednesday, he should present several petitions from Sussex, calling upon the noble Viscount to redeem his pledge.

THE SULTAN AND MEHEMET ALI.] Lord *Brougham* wished to ask the noble Viscount a question relating to Egypt and the Porte. He understood, that some time ago representations were made by the British Government both to the Sultan of Turkey and to Mehemet Ali, who was nominally the Governor of Egypt under the Porte, but in reality the Sovereign of that great country, requesting them to cease pursuing that system of mutual aggression on one another, which, if persisted in, could have a tendency only to produce the most frightful effects on themselves, as well as of endangering the peace of the East. He understood, that Mehemet Ali had pursued that course—had regularly complied with the requisition of the British Government—and had since directed his whole attention to the internal administration of his kingdom, in which great improvements had been effected. But he was informed, that the Porte, so far from acting in the same amicable spirit, had been arming itself, and that no less than 25,000 troops, 10,000 of one class, and 15,000 of another, had been raised since the intercession of the British Government; that 10,000 quintals of gunpowder had been laid in; a fleet had been manned, on board of which were several English officers; and that very large preparations had been made for raising artillery, and, above all, field artillery, to disturb the peace of the Levant. One reason why he felt the greatest interest in the affairs of Egypt was this—that whether it were to be continued nominally under the power of the Porte, and really to be an independent kingdom, or to be nominally as well as in reality an independent state under the dominion of Mehemet Ali, the great wisdom and great genius for affairs which had been shown by that monarch —whom he scrupled not to term the most distinguished of any individual upon any throne in the present time—had been such as to attract the most perfect approval and admiration of all to whom his proceedings were known. Of those measures he would mention only two. First, he had founded a department of public instruction—an example, he (Lord Brougham) could wish were followed by some other powers not far off. He had had the honour, as well as other noble Lords, of making the acquaintance of Mehemet Ali's Minister of Public Instruction, when he was lately upon a visit to this country, where he profited much by observing all our establishments for education; and, secondly, he had put down by an ordinance, which, with his accustomed vigour, he had carried into effect, the abominable slave-trade which had formerly disgraced the kingdom of Egypt, and which was commonly called *garzouah*, and known in our Eastern dominions by a name meaning, in both instances slave-hunting, and using the means of war for the purpose of hunting our fellow creatures like beasts of the chace. They were hunted, and taken down the Nile to be sold in the markets of the Levant. Mehemet Ali had, by a truly just and humane ordinance, at once put down that abominable crime and nuisance. He, (Lord Brougham) therefore, felt the greatest interest in all that concerned so great and humane a prince. He hoped, therefore, that the same measure of justice would be dealt out to the Sultan on the one hand, as to Mehemet Ali on the other. Mehemet Ali had complied with the terms required of him; but he was informed, that the Sultan had thought proper to adopt a contrary course, after gaining all the benefit of our interposition with the Sovereign of Egypt.

Viscount *Melbourne* said, it had been the most anxious desire of her Majesty's Government, in conjunction with the Allies of this country, to restrain each party from making any aggression upon the other, and to preserve, as far as it was in their power, a general peace in that quarter of the world. It was true, that both powers had acceded to the advice which had been given them, and he trusted, that the disposition to comply with it would continue. He thought, that the information which had reached the noble and learned Lord, that preparations were being made by the Sultan, was, if not totally unfounded, greatly exaggerated; nor did he believe, that the intentions suspected by the noble and learned Lord were entertained by that Sovereign. But, whatever might be the case, the noble and learned Lord might be assured, that it would be the continued policy of her Majesty's Government, in conjunction with her Allies, to do the utmost in their power to restrain both parties from doing anything oppressive against each other, or to make attacks upon one another.

Lord *Brougham* said, that nothing could be more satisfactory than the spirit in which the noble Viscount had answered his question. He was quite confident, that the mere statement which the noble Viscount had made would have an excellent effect at Constantinople; he was equally certain, that the expression of approbation of the conduct of Mehemet Ali would have the same good effect, in inducing that prince to persevere in his present wise and virtuous course of policy. He would now hand to the noble Viscount the information he had received.

CANADA — MR. MACKENZIE.] The Earl of *Ripon* said, it was with considerable reluctance that he called their Lordships' attention to a matter which, although not unconnected with a very important public question before the House, had, nevertheless, as far as the present motion was concerned, a special personal reference to himself. His motion would be for the production of certain information with respect to communications which in 1832, when he was colonial secretary, had taken place between himself and an individual of the name of Mackenzie. His attention had been called to this subject by having accidentally seen a work, published in 1835, in Canada, in which reference was made very specifically to those communications. The work was called "The Seventh Report of Grievances of the House of Assembly of Upper Canada." Some matters introduced into this report had since attracted notice in this country, and had led to observations connected with his communications with Mr. Mackenzie, which were of a nature somewhat injurious to him, alluding to his disposition respecting that individual, founded in misconception he had no doubt, and which were entirely contrary to the fact. Of this Grievance Report this Mr. Mackenzie was both the author and the hero. It was not at all surprising, therefore, that Mr. Mackenzie should have availed himself of the opportunity of describing himself as a great man, and of priding himself on the very great influence he had obtained in this country in communications with the Colonial-office. But he should be able to satisfy their Lordships, that this gentleman affecting to be a very great man was, in fact, a very small one. He came to England in 1832, and presented himself at the Colonial-office as the representative of twenty thousand persons of Upper Canada, complaining of a variety of grievances. He almost affected the importance of an ambassador coming from an independent state; in short, there was no end of the importance he assumed. He addressed himself to me (continued the noble Earl), requesting I would see and permit him to be accompanied by three other gentlemen. I had to consider first, whether I ought to see him at all; and secondly, upon what footing I ought to receive him. I without the least hesitation determined to see him, because I was of opinion, that the doors of the head of any public office ought to be open to any person who wished to make representations of what they conceived to be grievances; and I also thought it good policy to hear the parties themselves state the grounds and reasons of their complaints. I determined, therefore, to see Mr. Mackenzie, who I was not prepared to say was what he had since been called — a broken down pedlar. As to his individual character I had no reason to know that he had been guilty either of treason or sedition. I knew he was upon very bad terms with the House of Assembly. He had, as they alleged, libelled them. They expelled him from the Assembly: he was re-elected. They expelled him again, he was again re-elected. In short, he was what was considered a very troublesome person; and it was not impossible that he might be also mischievous. Considering the character he gave himself, as being a person charged to speak the sentiments of a whole people, it became necessary for me to consider whether it was consistent with my duty to admit him in that character. I thought I ought not. He had no right so to represent himself. I therefore desired my under-secretary, Lord Howick, to write a letter, to make it quite impossible for this person to misunderstand the footing upon which alone I could consent to see him. His application was made on the 21st of June. On the 23d of June, Lord Howick wrote to him, and after saying I should be ready to see him, he added (by my direction), "I have further to observe, that although Lord Goderich is ready to hear any observation you have to offer upon the affairs of Upper Canada as an individual interested in the welfare of that province, and as a member of the House of Assembly, he cannot recognize you as being deputed to act for any other person, nor can he enter into any discussion with you upon measures which his Majesty's Government may think it right to pursue." I think your Lordships will see, that that does not indicate on my part any hasty disposition to place unlimited confidence in that person. Lord Howick added, "The intentions of his Majesty's Government with respect to the affairs of the province can only be made known to the people of Upper Canada through the medium of the governor or the Legislature." No one, I think, can pretend, after this, to say, that I was incautious as to the extent upon which I should allow him to communicate with me. It reduced him from the lofty position he affected to assume, to his own natural level. I believed this disconcerted him very much, because he complained of it, and represented, that by my decision I shut the door of the Colonial-office on all that vast mass of facts which he offered to submit on behalf of the unrepresented landholders and inhabitants of Upper Canada. As to what he called a mass of facts, it was, on the contrary, as great a mass of trash as was ever got together. Lord Howick's answer to that complaint was, that there had been a mistake, and that I was not unwilling to see him, and added, that I only declined to see him as having any authority from any recognised body, and said, "Lord Goderich declines to enter on any official discussion with you on the public affairs of Canada, or to admit, that you are the organ of those whom you term the unrepresented landowners and inhabitants of Canada," and then added, "Lord Goderich cannot form his judgment as to the wishes and opinions of the people of Upper Canada from unauthorised statements of individuals in opposition to those of the House of Assembly, in which he is convinced that all classes of the inhabitants are fairly represented." I apprehend that was good sound constitutional doctrine; and it did happen that the Assembly concurred in no single point with Mr. Mackenzie. However, I saw him. He came accompanied by three other individuals. The first was Mr. Hume, then the Member for Middlesex; another was Mr. Viger, a sort of hybrid agent from Lower Canada; and the third was a Mr. Riarson, a gentleman of the Wesleyan persuasion. As soon as I found what it was Mr. Mackenzie was coming to talk to me about, it occurred to me that it was very singular that Mr. Viger should be of the party, he having nothing to do with them, but was a member of the Assembly of Lower Canada. I thought it might lead to very great inconvenience if I allowed him to be a party to the interview, and I asked what he could have to do with it. It was answered that the grievances were so much a matter of general concern that Lower Canada had almost as great an interest in them as Upper Canada. I, however, did not see the advantage of his being present. I thought it might lead to confusion, and I declined seeing Mr. Viger any more. Mr. Riarson stayed; his purpose for staying was to inform me that he came over with Mr. Mackenzie, but that he should not come again, because he did not agree in the views of Mr. Mackenzie. Mr. Mackenzie, therefore, was left to his own unassisted efforts. He fired at me a great number of memorials at subsequent periods; but I soon became satisfied that Mr. Mackenzie was as vain and shallow-headed a gentleman as ever I encountered; that he was totally incapable of managing business in any intelligible form, or of expressing his own views, or understanding the views of others. I think your Lordships will not believe that I was much disposed to place anything in the shape of confidence in him. On the 8th of September Lord Howick wrote to him thus:—"Lord Goderich is willing to receive and to pay such attention as they may seem to require to any further written statements you may think fit to submit, and if you have anything to state which can only be verbally communicated, his Lordship will not refuse to afford you an opportunity of stating it, as far as his other avocations will allow." This was rather a cold communication, and not indicative of a disposition to give my confidence to him. I had only one other conference with him; and in the Report of Grievances I find he endeavours to make his friends believe, that a dispatch which was sent to Canada the day after that conference was in consequence of a two hours' conversation he had had with me on that occasion. It was perfectly true that a dispatch was dated the day after that conference; but when their Lordships were told what was the nature of that dispatch, they would perceive that it was not possible it could be the result of any conversation he had had with Mr. Mackenzie. It was a very long and elaborate dispatch, and one which touched on many questions of general policy, entering at the same time into minute details and interesting points affecting Upper Canada. This dispatch so far from proving that he had any confidence in Mackenzie, proved distinctly that he could not by possibility have entertained any, because it contained an elaborate refutation of all the statements which Mackenzie had made, and stated that he considered what Mackenzie had represented as grievances were no grievances at all. That was the nature of his communication with Mackenzie; the conclusions which had been drawn from it, therefore, were not founded in fact. Allusion had been made to the great respect with which he had received the representations of Mr. Mackenzie. What he received were not the representations of that person, but what he had received with respect were the petitions of 24,000 men. It was his bounden duty to treat them with respect, whether he adopted their representations and acted upon them or not. As to any other application of the word "respect" contained in the sentence which had been commented upon, he would say that the sense of the expression was entirely misunderstood, and that it had no reference whatever to Mr. Mackenzie. Perhaps, my Lords, concluded the noble Earl, I am laying too much stress upon this; but feeling that I am a loyal subject of her Majesty, I do not, my Lords, much like to be held up as a friend and fosterer of persons of this description-- of such an individual as this Mr. Mackenzie, who, it appears, is now an outlaw—an admitted rebel, and a traitor. I confess I should think it a great reflection upon me if I had given my confidence to, or had placed any trust whatever in such a person. I, therefore, have felt it my duty to say that he had not the slightest influence over me in what I thought proper to do in respect to advising his late Majesty on the measures to be adopted with respect to Upper Canada. The noble Earl then moved for the production of the papers to which he had alluded in the course of his speech.

The Marquess of *Normanby* said, he had not the slightest objection to the production of the papers moved for by the noble Earl. Since the noble Earl had given notice upon the subject, he (the Marquess of Normanby) had looked into the dispatch referred to, and he certainly could have borne his testimony, if any corroboration of the statement of the noble Earl had been necessary, as to the manner in which the noble Earl had guarded his intercourse with Mr. Mackenzie. But although the noble Earl had stated that his desire was to vindicate himself from certain imputations founded on a report of grievances published in 1835, yet he (the Marquess of Normanby) was at the same time aware that public attention had been called to a supposed relation between Mr. Mackenzie and his noble Friend by a much more recent publication. Therefore, in assenting to the production of these papers, he was anxious to guard himself against it being supposed that any unauthorised publication had in the least fettered him in the exercise of that discretion which he otherwise would have used as to the production of any of these documents to either House of Parliament. He had not the slightest feeling of personal ill-will towards the gallant officer (Sir Francis Head) from whom that publication had emanated. Quite the contrary; he had great respect for his bravery as a military character, and knew him to be a man of varied acquirements, and of great ability and talent. He wished to give no opinion with regard to his previous conduct; but with regard to this one act to which public attention had been called, he begged once for all to say, that he believed it to be an act perfectly unparalleled, and he trusted it would long remain a solitary instance. He owned he felt very strongly upon this subject. He would not allude to anything connected with that publication more than to state that he believed the insinuations were perfectly unwarranted, which had been thrown out against the private character of a highly honourable individual. He was only speaking as the head of the office whose documents had been so brought before the public; and he wished to take this opportunity of protesting against that conduct being drawn into a precedent, and of stating that as long as he should have the honour of serving her

Majesty in that office, he should do hi utmost to restrain and prevent the repetition of such conduct.

Papers ordered.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Tuesday, March 12, 1839.

MINUTES.] Petitions presented. By Messrs. Hodges, Eaton, Kemble, Parker, V. Stuart, Holmes, Christopher, Benett, O. Gore, jun., O. Gore, sen., Fitzgibbon, Hurt, Pease, Cripps, Palmer, Darby, W. Duncombe, Fleming, Horn, Barneby, and Sandford, Lords Henniker, Eastnor. Worsley, Grimston, Hotham, and G. Lennox, Sirs G. Knightley, C. B. Vere, J. Tyrell, and C. Burrell, the Earl of Darlington, Captain Gordon, Colonels Wood, Lygon, and Rushbrooke, and the Earl of Lincoln, from a great number of places, against the Repeal of the Corn-laws.—By Messrs. Hume, Ewart, T. Duncombe, Villiers, Grote, Elliot, Lambton, Colliers, Chalmers, M. Philips, D. W. Harvey, Brotherton, Pease, Lord Morpeth, General Sharpe, Captain Berkeley, Mr. P. Thomson, and Sir G. Strickland, from a great number of places, for the Repeal of the Corn-laws.

SUNDAY DELIVERY OF LETTERS.] Sir *R. Inglis*, seeing the Chancellor of the Exchequer in his place, wished to ask him a question respecting a memorial presented by 1,600 solicitors against the proposed plan of opening the Post Office on Sundays. As the receipt of that memorial had not been acknowledged, the memorialists were anxious to have a statement from the Chancellor of the Exchequer of the views of the Government on the subject.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* said, that the memorial to which the right hon. Baronet had alluded, was received on the 22d of January, 1839, and an answer returned to it on the day following but one. In consequence of some error it came back returned to the Treasury. No disrespect whatever was intended towards the memorialists. With respect to any intention on the part of the Government of opening the Post Office on Sundays there was not the slightest possible shadow of a ground for supposing that they had ever entertained the idea of opening the Post Office for the receipt and delivery of letters on Sundays, though that idea had been entertained by others. But with respect to delivering letters to those parties who might apply for them, that was a question that, perhaps, might be entertained; but on that he begged to reserve his opinion.

Subject dropped.

CORN-LAWS.] Mr. *C. P. Villiers* said, that it was in pursuance of that course which he ventured to suggest as convenient for the discussion of the Corn-laws, that he then rose to bring under consideration those more general consequences of the law which on a former occasion had been kept from view. And certainly he thought it far preferable thus to judge a measure by its general effect, than by those only which might be deemed incidental or especial. But still he adhered to an opinion he before expressed, that any law which is alleged to be prejudicial to the manufacturing or commercial interests of this country, is well worthy of distinct deliberation; and notwithstanding the censures cast on the course which had been pursued, and the reproofs which had been offered to the manufacturers of this country, for their impatience on a subject on which they have hitherto been charged with apathy and indifference, he could not but think, that in their respectful application to this House, to submit information upon a subject by which they were aggrieved, they had not only pursued a course which was reasonable and becoming in itself, but also—regarding both the present and the future prospects of the question—a course which was the most judicious that they could have adopted; and his only regret was, that those who had avowedly opposed this question should have forgotten what was generally expected from that House by this country, namely, to hear before you decide. But the manner in which this question was proposed for discussion that night, would elicit upon what grounds it was, that the House thought it expedient to refuse to hear the information that was tendered, and whether it was, that having that information, it needed not to be given, or whether it was, that the matter of such information being in dispute, it was thought wise so to leave it. The question was now presented to the House in a manner that would open the widest field for the display of all that was known on the subject, and there would be this advantage (he feared it might be the only one), that it would at least enable the country to learn upon what ground it was, that the majority of this House intended to maintain these laws against the interest and the wishes of the community. He was glad, therefore, to observe the eagerness which his opponents manifested to enter upon the discussion. There was one, it seemed, so anxious to be heard, that he not only asked the House to reject his, (Mr. Villiers') motion, but he had recorded his argument along with his notice, and it was an argument of so bold a character, that he owned he was curious to hear its explanation. He hoped, that upon this occasion, also, they would hear those more general views taken of this subject, that they were reproved on that side for not having taken before; and that when they were told, that this was not only an economical question, but one that was far wider, he trusted, that they should hear what were the political, social, and moral considerations which could justify the support of such a law. He did not deny, that the question could be considered in such light, and most certainly he would not shrink himself from so regarding it, because he believed, that the more extensively this question was considered—the more minutely its consequences were examined—the less would persons be left in doubt as to the true character of its policy. But still, he was of opinion, that it was but a very simple question, and as much so, as many of those questions that had been already decided in this country. It appeared to him to resemble such questions as those of personal liberty, or freedom of opinion. There seemed to be even less difficulty to decide it, and it was matter of surprise, that it should be left to this day to dispute a question so easy to be solved. It really appeared marvellous, that at this time of our history, they should be gravely discussing whether a free, an industrious, and commercial people should have a right to exercise an honest industry in the way they pleased—whether they should be allowed to carry on trade in any manner, that should be advantageous to themselves, and beneficial to the community—and whether they should be allowed to obtain their subsistence in any market at the least cost to themselves and at the best advantage to the country. It was difficult to conceive, that they were discussing a question of that kind, and hereafter it would be a curious sign of the integrity and the intelligence of that House, that one Member should have found it important to move, that it was the privilege of the people to exercise an honest industry with perfect freedom; and that another Member (and perhaps the more successful one) should have moved, that it was important, that the people should be restricted in the exercise of that liberty, and that the law which had limited the amount and raised the price of human subsistence had worked well for the interests of the country! Really if it occurred to the noble Lord, the other evening, to think, that the House must slumber pending an inquiry into the consequences of such a law, it seemed to him to be no stretch of the imagination to suppose, that those who resisted the motion which was to be made to night, would heartily laugh when they went forth to a division at the folly and ignorance of the people who could submit to such legislation. But not again to expose himself to the charge of arguing this question upon too narrow grounds and as it was proposed by the hon. Gentleman, the mover of the amendment, to show, that these laws were for the protection of the productive industry of the country, it might not, perhaps, be inappropriate, that he should proceed to consider the effects of these laws upon the most numerous and the most important class of the community, which class he considered to be the working class; for upon their condition, and contentment, must the stability of our social fabric depend. And here he conceived, that he and the author of the amendment were directly at issue, for although his language was not so plain as that which he (Mr. Villiers) would be disposed to use, yet he concluded, that when the hon. Gentleman used the term "productive industry," he meant only what he (Mr. Villiers) meant, namely, "those persons whose labour was employed in the business of production." He would suggest, however, to the hon. Member to be as clear and as explicit in the language he might use as he was able to be, because, although nothing new could be alleged on this subject, and though neither a fact nor an argument which should be used could be new, yet there was this which was new, namely, that the attention of the public was anxiously directed to the subject; and he expected, that no fact that no argument, and that no opinion would be stated in the discussion, which would not be closely and severely examined by those who were now interesting themselves in this question. If he understood the amendment which it was the intention of the hon. Member to move, it declared, that that which tended to raise the price of provisions had been of benefit to the working classes of this country. Now, he would venture to say, that a proposition more contradictory of what might have been expected, or of what had been actually experienced, had never been propounded. He would tell the hon. Member, and those with whom he acted upon this question, that it might be laid down as a principle, that whatever tends to facilitate production, or to increase the amount of objects of necessary consumption confers a blessing on the community at large—increases the wealth of the country—leaves to every one greater means of consuming other objects, thus creating fresh demand for labour, and improves the condition of every member of the community. There is nothing in the article of food that can possibly distinguish it from other articles of general consumption; and, notwithstanding the arguments that had been generally employed by the hon. Member and his party, he would venture to say, that if any means could be discovered for increasing the produce of the land, or for cheapening the cost of production in the cultivation of the land—or if any improvement could be introduced, which could in any way dispense with the services of cultivators or of labourers, the hon. Member and his party would instantly resort to those means, and laugh to scorn any person who should venture to tell them, that for the purpose of protecting the cultivators, or labourers they ought to forego all these advantages. Now, if he understood what the hon. Member proposed, it was, that the law which had had the effect which he (Mr. Villiers) had stated, was of advantage to the productive classes in this country. Now he would divide the productive classes into two portions; one should be those who were employed in the production of food, and the other would be those who were employed in the production of other things; and he told the hon. Member, that it was utterly impossible for him to prove that the high price of food ever had been, or, indeed, ever could be, of benefit to the agricultural labourers. In confirmation of his opinion on this point, he would refer them to what had been actually observed. In the first place, what had been said by the commissioners who had inquired into the Poor-laws? The gentlemen who were employed to investigate and inquire into the operation of the old Poor-law, prior to its abolition, were able to trace all the pauperism under which the country then suffered — which had reduced the labourer in 1830 to a state more degraded than that of the slave, and in which he was less regarded than the cattle in the field to the high prices of provisions and the low price of labour. It was the concurrent testimony of every person employed in the inquiry, that in 1795 or 1797, when, the price of provisions rose to a great height, the farmers first resorted to the plan of paying the labourers out of the rates, for the purpose of escaping the increase of wages, that would have been rendered necessary on account of the increased prices of food. From that time to the peace, the price of provisions were unusually high, and the condition of the agricultural labourers became deteriorated and remained worse till after prices had fallen; showing, therefore, a connection between the price of provisions and the condition of the agricultural labourer. The result of the high price of provisions was, that a larger number of labourers were in the market, employers have less means of employing them, which by changing the proportions of supply to demand, lowered the value of labour whilst it increased the cost of its support. The next point to which he would refer, to prove, that the agricultural labourers were badly off when the price of provisions was high, was that it was, at that moment the employer sought to extract from them a greater amount of labour than at any other time. It was known to every one who resided in the country, that this was the case. Whenever the price of provisions was high they found, that a greater number of labourers were ready to accede to the terms of their employers, owing to the difficulties of their position. He did not state this merely upon his own authority, for he would quote, in support of it, the evidence given before a Committee of that House on the Corn Bill. It was the evidence of a person who was a land agent, and was also an occupier of land, named Milne. Before the Committee, he gave this evidence:

"I wished to inclose a farm at the latter end of the year 1812, or the beginning of 1813. I sent for my bailiff and told him, that I had enclosed, about twenty-five years ago, a good deal of land; that the inclosure at that time cost me three shillings per ell of thirty-seven inches; that a neighbour of mine, two or three years ago, had made similar inclosures which cost him five shillings per ell; that I thought he had paid too much, and that I ought to do it cheaper. The answer I got from my bailiff was—that provisions were very high, that the labourers were doing double work, and that, of course, there was less demand for labour; and that he could do these inclosures last year at a cheaper rate than I had ever done them; and he actually executed this inclosure at about two shillings and sixpence per ell. He again came to me, and told me, that I had proposed to him to do some ditching and draining upon another farm, which I did not intend to do till about a twelvemonth after from the circumstance of not being in full possession of the whole farm. He requested, that I would allow him to do it that season, as he could do it so much cheaper, and that a great many labourers were idle from having little work, in consequence of those employed doing double work. I desired him to go on with that labour likewise, and he actually contracted, for very large ditches, at sixpence an ell, which, I do not think I could do now under from one shilling to one shilling and sixpence, in consequence of the fall in provisions."

That was the evidence which had been given by a person before the Committee of the House, and he had made enquiries in other places, and he found it uniformly confirmed by other testimony. Still this was said to be a labourer's question, for it was stated that if the Corn-laws were repealed a great number of labourers would be thrown out of employment. This, then, seemed to imply that the Corn-laws were necessary for retaining agricultural labourers in constant employment. But he ventured to say that the Corn-laws had not that effect—that they did not secure the employment of agricultural labourers, and that it was quite accidental what labourers were employed under the present system; this was proved by experience. It had for some years been a constant complaint in the agricultural parishes, that there was a redundancy of labour. Since the Poor-law unions had been formed 6,000 persons had been assisted to go into the manufacturing districts, and upwards of 6,000 had voluntarily gone there, and had been doing well, shewing indeed, the great importance of those districts to the agricultural people, there had been besides a constant emigration of labourers to the North American colonies, and which was now encouraged, and in great measure paid for by the state. Neither had the Corn-laws rendered them content; the fact was so far from it, that since the Corn-laws had been actually in operation, agricultural labourers had been more dissatisfied than before. In the year 1830 the Corn-laws had been fifteen years in operation, and he ventured to say, that at no period were the labourers in a greater state of dissatisfaction and wretchedness. But it was said that the land in this country was kept in cultivation by the Corn-laws, which gave employment to labourers. But he wanted to know upon what principle of policy it was, that that argument was grounded. With regard to labourers, it was found that machinery could in some cases be used to perform the work which they had formerly performed, and which upon its introduction superseded their employment, but if the principle were sound that Corn-laws should be maintained because they gave occupation to the labourers, why were not the advantages of using the threshing-machine foregone for the same purpose? But where was there an instance in which the use of machinery had been given up? And he asked then, why bad land which was like bad machinery should be used merely for the sake of giving employment to agricultural labourers? So much then either on principle or in practice, for the protection to the agricultural labourers of this law. But he had now got a statement which he would read to the House, showing what had been the value of the wages of all of the other productive classes, under different prices of provisions. He had selected two years before the present Corn-laws, and two years subsequently to their coming into operation. In 1822, the average price of wheat was 43*s*., and a labourer receiving 31*s*. 6*d*. per week was enabled to command twenty-three pecks of wheat. In 1828, when wheat was at 60*s*. the wages amounted to 34*s*., and eighteen pecks only could be procured. The hand-loom weaver could command, when wheat was at 43*s*., six and a-half pecks; when it was at 60*s*., he could command three and a half pecks. The cotton-spinner at Manchester, under the cheap price, could command sixteen, and under the dear price fourteen pecks. The stocking maker of Leicester could command eight pecks in the cheap year, and four and a-half only in the dear year. The labourer could procure seven and a-half pecks when the price was 43*s*., and only four and a-half pecks when it was 60*s*. The wages of the printer, compositor, and persons of that class, did not vary much, but they were at an average of 36*s*. per week, and while the wheat was at 43*s*. they could procure twenty-seven pecks, and when it was 60*s*. they could only procure nineteen pecks. Since the present Corn-laws were passed, in 1831 the average price of wheat was 66*s*.; in 1835 the average was 39*s*. The cotton spinners in the dear year were enabled to command fifteen pecks, and in the cheap year twenty three pecks. When the price of wheat was at 66*s*., the poor hand-loom weaver was able to command only two pecks of wheat; while the price averaged 39*s*. he was enabled to command four pecks. The cotton spinners at Manchester received 30*s.* per week, and could obtain fourteen and a-half pecks; the stocking-makers at Leicester when they had 7*s.* per week, could obtain four pecks and-a-half; and when in the dear season they received 8*s.*, they could obtain three pecks. The labourer obtained when wheat was 66*s.* six pecks, and when 39*s.* four pecks—the printer at 66*s.* obtained seventeen, and when at 39*s* obtained twenty-eight. Now, this was the law that gave protection to productive industry, and which, by maintaining the high price of provisions, placed the working classes in a better position. This was the manner in which it directly affected them. But what was to be said for a law whose claim it was to protect industry, when its indirect effect on the manufacturing classes was considered? Why, what was the ground on which protection to the landowners was claimed, according to the author of the Amendment? It was that the productive classes were not able to compete with foreigners in lightly taxed and cheap living countries. Why, that was the very case of our artisans and manufacturers; they said they could not compete with the cheaper living and lighter-taxed artisans of the continent, and they asked for protection against a law which made living dear here in order that they might compete with their neighbours abroad. They were employed in fact, by a foreign customer, who cared not by whom he got his work done; he cared not whether they were English, Germans, Swiss, or Belgians. He only cared for getting the best article at the cheapest rate. If he found that the artisans of Belgium and Switzerland could produce their work cheaper than those of England, because their rate of living was cheaper, he would employ the inhabitants of those countries; and on that ground, it was, that Englishmen sought to be placed under no legal disadvantage as compared with foreigners. There was this important difference, however, between the claim of our artisans for protection, and that protection which the supporters of the Corn-laws claimed; namely, that the farmer did not ask for a law to make food cheap, only the repeal of the law passed to make food dear. Our manufacturers felt themselves each year less able to compete with foreigners. The difference between them was, that they lived at different rates; and to live on equal terms the Englishman claimed the protection of this House, and he should like to hear on what ground such protection could be withheld. He would not now go into the details of foreign competition as he had done on a former occasion; but it appeared to be admitted, that the evil did exist, and it was said, that it must continue; but hence it was that manufacturers were called upon as they had heard stated to execute orders for their foreign employers, with directions, that if they could not do them at certain low prices they need not do them at all; and that, therefore being desirous of executing them they called upon their men to work at low wages, or not at all. This system had been going on now for five or six years past in this country, and it had had the effect of throwing many of our artisans out of employment. The House saw, that it must continue to exist so long as the circumstances of this country, as compared with those of foreign nations, remained unaltered; and he wanted to know whether they could expect, seeing that cheapness must always determine the command by any country of a foreign market, that if foreign manufacturers produced articles at a cheaper rate than themselves, that they could maintain their foreign trade. He was aware, that the argument would be advanced against him by some persons in support of the Corn-laws, that they must not depend upon foreign, but upon home trade. He did not deny, that the home trade was beneficial, but that was his case again; for he said, that the home consumer should be put in the best possible condition, and the home consumers were not only the landlords, but all other consumers, and the cheaper they could procure their means of subsistence, the more they would have to spend in manufactured goods; but the Corn-laws were depriving the home consumer of the means of supporting the trade of his own country. He knew, however, that it was not very usual, in discussing this subject, to put it forward as a labourer's question, and it was, indeed, new this Session, to hear it called a labourer's question. If he was not mistaken, it was behind the farmer's claim to protection, that the real object of the law was usually concealed. Now, he hoped, that the case of the British farmer on this occasion would receive a very clear and distinct consideration from this House; because he was perfectly aware, that many of this very valuable class of capitalists were under delusion upon the subject; but he knew, that their attention had been roused to the matter, and he thought, that they would profit by attending to what was stated in this discussion. They would expect something more than vague declamations of their importance, or exaggerated statements of their distress; and they were to hear it seems from their friends, that the Corn-laws had protected them from distress; but they would also have to hear that they had no real interest in the Corn-laws, that they had not in fact saved them from distress, and that much of their past suffering might be traced to those laws. He wished, indeed, that the whole question turned upon this part of the subject, for he was confident that no further apprehensions would, in that case, be entertained by such men, if they were indeed advocates of the existing law. He was very anxious, that he should not be in any error in anything that he said in reference to this part of the question, he meant the interest of the farmer, and he hoped that he should be corrected if he made any mistake about their condition; but he wanted to know whether the farmer could be regarded in any other light but that of a person who, having a certain property employed it as capital int he cultivation of land, and whether he did not proceed in that matter with the same spirit and purpose with which any merchant would proceed in hiring a vessel of the owner, or another man borrowed money to engage in trade? He was a capitalist, and he proceeded in his business in a commercial spirit; could there then be any doubt, that the price at which he was able to obtain his land must be determined by the value of the produce of the land, and the competition of other capitalists? Those capitalists who were in the same trade would not allow him to obtain more than the average rate and profit, and, on the other hand, the land owners aware of that circumstance, would not permit him to procure his land at less than the market rate, or what others would give for it. Then if a law should be passed which purposed to fix the price of the produce of the land at 80*s.* or 64*s.* a quarter, if it were wheat in which its value was measured, he supposed that it would not be denied, that the capitalists would bargain for the land according to that price. This, however, perhaps was too plain to be questioned. But it was said, that the demand for protection on the part of the farmer, rests upon certain local burdens which press exclusively upon him. But to this I say in answer, that if such be the case, that they do not take an occupier of land by surprise. They were in existence beforehand, and they were as well known as those which attach to the occupancy of a house; and if the party had not the capital to occupy the land and to pay the charges to which it was liable he would ask what business had he to occupy it? Therefore, if he took the land with all these charges upon it, all the difference was, that if the charges were high, and the value of the produce was high, a larger amount of capital was required than it would otherwise do. This appeared to be so evident that it perhaps would not be disputed; but then it was said, that these charges placed British agriculture under a disadvantage as compared with that in other countries; but then that was a reason for a better distribution in this country of such charges; not a reason for the Corn-law, because it was the effect of the Corn-law to make each of the charges on the farmer more onerous;—for what, in fact, were the farmer's outgoings? They were poor rates, county rates, labour, seed, support of horses and servants, and public taxes. Now which of these were not increased by the high price of provisions? And what was the interest of the farmer in high prices if they were occasioned by a great and unnecessary expense in production—if his outgoings were too great to allow him to obtain a profit on his capital after paying his rent, his business is to seek an abatement of that rent; for it would be the proof in itself that his rent was too high? But, perhaps, it would be said tonight that all this was very true that the farmer cared only to get a profit on his capital, but that somehow or other, either through the bounty of heaven, or the munificence of landlords, the farmers of this country always obtained this, and had done well since the Corn-laws were passed, and that it was a thousand pities to disturb that which appeared to work so well. Sir, if this has been the case, it would not be difficult to characterise the statements that have been made about every other Session on the subject, when Members are in the habit of declaring their inability to express in adequate language the sufferings of the farmers. He had heard a noble Duke, late a Member of this House, whose friendship for the farmer was the matter of such note, commence his address by regretting that he had again to repeat the sad tale of agricultural distress that he had so often told to this House. A year after the Corn Bill had passed, the Board of agriculture reported, that under the present deplorable state of the national agriculture, bankruptcies, seizures, executions for debt, imprisonment, and farmers becoming parish paupers, were particularly mentioned by many of their correspondents. That great arrears of rent, and, in many cases, tithes and poor-rates unpaid; improvements of every kind generally discontinued; live-stock greatly lessened; tradesmen's bills unpaid; general pauperism in the agricultural districts; were circumstances communicated to them in language denoting extreme distress." Within twenty years five committees had sat on what was usually termed the "unparalleled distress of agriculture;" and he had looked into some of the reports which had been made, and he found that only about five years after the Corn-laws had passed there was instituted an enquiry into the sufferings of the agriculturists, and if he collected anything from this enquiry it was that these distresses were produced by the Corn-laws themselves. The Corn-laws were denounced in this report as delusive in principle, and calculated to ruin every one who was connected with the trade in grain. In 1826 the law was not altered, and again there was distress. In 1828 the law was altered; but the same principle was maintained in that law which had existed in that previously in existence. In 1833 and 1836 complaints were again made to this House, and a committee again sat upon the subject, and on looking through this inquiry he found many details and much evidence of the sufferings of the farmers; and although it might be seen that leading questions were put, as if to invite evidence upon the subject of distress, yet he knew that the statements which were made corresponded with those which were made out of the House. Now in examining the enquiries into the alleged distress of the agriculturists, he had been curious to ascertain whether any great landowner was called on these occasions to state whether he was suffering from any great distress and he looked in vain for any such evidence. It had, indeed, been said, that the farmers had been compelled to pay their rents out of their capital, that they could not perform their engagements, but he saw no evidence of the landlords' reducing their establishments, their horses, or their dogs, or of their quitting the country before the usual season. Now his conclusion from these circumstances was, that the promises made by the Corn-laws had been delusive as regarded the farmer, and had caused those distresses which had occasioned the inquiries. The Corn-laws proposed to fix a price which was to be remunerative. In 1815 Parliament said that the farmer must have eighty-shillings for his wheat to remunerate him for its cultivation, and the farmer, trusting to the promises and calculations of the House of Commons, arranged to pay rent in reference to that price. But how far did the law realise the expectations which it had raised? In a few years after this price had been fixed it was reduced to thirty-seven shillings; but the farmer had then contracted with his landlord, and it was then that he found himself distressed, and it was then that he was compelled to pay the rent out of his capital; and it is on these occasions that the landlord, after getting his rent, comes to this House to detail the distress of his tenant, and gets a committee to collect evidence of what they both knew before but with a view to some legislative relief. That, he had no hesitation in saying, was the history of many of these inquiries. He had said, that the same principle which had been adopted in the old law, was pursued in that which now existed. Under the old law, the promised price was 80*s.*; it was now 64*s.*; the act of 1828 promised that 64*s.* per quarter should be the price; and he found, that in the evidence before the committee of the House of Lords, in 1836, there was some farmer who declared, that if he had been aware of what would have happened, he never would have entered into the engagements which he had made. They had expected that the price of produce would have been maintained, and they had taken their farms in 1828 upon that understanding; but, in 1832 and 1833, they found that wheat had fallen from 30 to 40 per cent., and they were therefore unable to meet their engagements; and then their distress began. This is the consequence of this system. The farmer incurs expenses, and has large outgoings, all calculated upon a certain price being returned for his produce; and he finds himself engaged to pay a rent according to the price which had been promised by law, while he is disappointed himself in receiving that price. The House of Commons professes to regulate the price, but which it could not do, unless it could also limit the quantity, which it dare not do. The attempt to combine the two, only ruined the farmer and angered the people. They tantalised the people with food, within their sight, at half the price, which they were forbid to touch, and they encouraged the farmer to believe that it would not be touched; and then came a bad season in this country, which, though it advanced the prices, was not really beneficial to the farmer, because the quantity was less; but the effect was, that a quantity of foreign grain was let in, which was produced at a much less cost than that which was grown at home, and the farmer found himself ruined by the fall which in consequence took place. Then, if there happened to be a bad season abroad, as there had been at home, and there was difficulty in procuring grain from abroad, the farmer heard the law denounced by the people in every town and city, and he knew not what engagements to make from the uncertainty of what might occur; and this was the person for whose benefit it was said, that this law was enacted—the man who only cared to know how he stood, to get a steady demand for his produce, and to know what terms he should make with the owner of the land. One year he procured 120*s.*, amidst the curses of the people; and in another he sold, probably through the intervention of the sheriff, at 37*s.*, and then he was persuaded to uphold this law because it secured to him steadiness of price! And this system was maintained in opposition to that of which we had had experience, and to which he would wish to recur, of the period from 1773 to 1791, when the ports were open upon paying a nominal duty of 6*d.*, and when there was more agricultural improvement going on, more general contentment, and less fluctuation, than had existed at any other time; and that was the experience we had had of opening the ports. The farmer was a man of peculiar habits and feelings, and he could not help believing, that he had been practised upon in this law being passed. He was a man strongly attached to the soil where he was born, and which his fathers had occupied. He was a man of not much education, he was not, what was usually termed, a man of business, he was little able to engage in any other occupation, than that in which he had been brought up, and unwilling to leave the place in which he had beens bred; he was apt, therefore, in order to retain his position, to enter into engagements which in prudence he was not justified in making, and willing to agree to any terms which the landlord might propose. The landlord was aware of this, and then a dreadful struggle began with the farmer, who was anxious to maintain his occupation, but was unable to meet his engagement. He knew, in many instances all this had occurred, that that was what had taken place. The landlord exacted too much rent, and the occupier, desirous to maintain his word, and expecting redress from the Legislature, or that things would turn out better, was deluded by various circumstances, and was constantly undertaking that which he could not perform. He was not speaking exactly without book in this matter, but he was almost repeating the statements which farmers had made to him upon the subject. They knew well how little foundation there was for the argument against the repeal, that it would throw much land out of cultivation; they knew how vastly the value of the land had risen in their time; and they had quite wit enough to see, that the rent of any land must cease before it ceased to be cultivated. But the farmers were now generally in arrear, it was difficult for them to express their free opinions on the operation of the Corn-laws, yet they were every day growing more enlightened respecting their interests, and it would not be long before they would declare themselves opposed to restrictions, the only effect of which was to raise the value of land. He had dwelt on the probable effect of the repeal of these laws on the farmer, somewhat more at length, than, perhaps, the real importance of this branch of the subject deserved, and he had done so, because he felt that of all the grounds of opposition that could be urged against his motion, this was the one which afforded the supporters of the present system the most plausible pretence. He now came to that view of the question which he conceived to be paramount to all others, because it was the only one which ought to be regarded in every question, namely, the effect of those laws on the community at large. Though he must own that he approached the consideration of this part of the subject with a feeling somewhat of humiliation—for was it in this age to be a question—a matter for doubt and serious argument—whether or no it was for the advantage of the community, to have the necessaries of life in abundance, and to be able to obtain them at the cheapest rate. This, as a question, was really an absurd one; and one feels a moral certainty that if the persons who were interested in denying to the people this advantage were not a very powerful class, anybody who seriously raised the question would be met with ridicule and contempt. Were it not, indeed, for the lamentable success with which interested men had mystified the question, and the ignorance that yet prevailed upon the subject, he would hardly enter upon the discussion. In the first place he had a right to say that the loss sustained by the community from the existence of these laws was exactly in proportion to the loss which the supporters of the monopoly contended they would suffer if it was put an end to. If the landed interest opposed repeal to avert loss from themselves, then the opponents of the Corn-laws were entitled to consider that they sustained an equivalent loss in the excess it compelled them to pay for their food. If the supporters of the law as it exists opposed repeal because the effect would be to lower so vastly the price of produce, was not that convertible to a proof that the community were now sufferers to the extent of the difference between the present price of produce and that reduced price which the landed interest so much feared. Taking the calculations of the least sanguine or prejudiced persons, it appeared that, at the very lowest estimate, the loss of the community in the price of wheat alone, by reason of the continuance of the Corn-laws amounted to ten millions a-year. Now this was equal to a poll tax of 8*s.* a-head, or a tax of 2*l.* on each family in the kingdom. With a large class of labourers this amounted to a month's labour, or, taking the number of hours of labour during the day on an average at ten, a tax of ten millions a-year obliged him to labour three quarters of an hour each day more than he would have needed to labour if no such tax on food existed. The calculation he had used applied to the tax on wheat only; but the effect of the tax on oats also would have to be added to the loss sustained by the labourer, because in many parts of the country, oats were more in request for general purposes than wheat. This was a mere calculation founded upon such data as were within the reach of the opponents of the Corn-laws; but in order to ascertain the full amount of the injury inflicted on the community by the existence of the Corn-law, he must first hear the calculation of loss anticipated by the landed interest from its repeal. The one would be the best evidence of the other. He now came to the consideration of the effect of this law on local and general taxation. First, as regarded local taxation; take the Poor-rates. In the Poor-law Unions already formed, 8 000*l.* a-week was spent in flour alone. If flour was now at double the price it would be at if the law were repealed, was not the difference between this 8,000*l.* a week and the reduced price of corn after a repeal so much taken out of the pocket of the rate-payer? If the guardians of the poor could put their hands into the warehouses and take the flour at the price, at which it was imported, would not they save an enormous amount to the rate-payers? It did not stop there, for all money unduly taken from the rate-payers for the maintenance of the poor was a deduction from a fund for the employment of labour, which by not being so employed added to the amount of destitution. In any given district this might be made the subject of strict calculation; for instance, in a poor-law union. The whole amount of the poor-rate was four millions and a-half, and, therefore, looking at the subject in a practical point of view, he hoped, as the hon. Gentlemen opposite were so anxious to make this question a labourer's question, that they would also make it a rate-payers question, and consider the vast amount that might be saved to them in poor-rates alone if the law were repealed. He hoped the rate-payers themselves would make it a rate-payers question, and that when about to pay their rates, they would ask themselves, why they had to pay so large an amount? if it was for the good of the poor they would not grudge it—but if for the purpose of maintaining a mischievous monopoly, they would surely demur. Then as regarded the county rate: 100,000*l.* a year was expended in the support of prisoners in the different bridewells throughout the country, and this portion of the county rate from which the landed interest applied not long since to be exempted, and which they succeeded in transferring to another fund, was nearly doubled in consequence of the high price of provisions. The same remark applied also to all asylums for lunatics, to hospital schools, and generally to all public institutions. It was a most important consideration in the expenditure of such institutions whether bread was dear or cheap. But if this argument were good as applied to local taxation, how much more powerful was its effect as regarded general taxation? There was scarcely a department of the public service in which a reduction in the price of provisions would not be felt. In support of the army, navy, and ordnance, 18,000,000*l.* a-year were expended. As regarded the army the excess expended in the price of bread was marked in a peculiar manner, every soldier being guaranteed the repayment of all above *6d.* a loaf. Now, if the Corn-laws were repealed, this additional expense would not fall on the public, because they would not have to pay more than the sixpence for the loaf. The miscellaneous estimates amounted to 2,000,000*l.* a year; in this branch of the public expenditure also a great change would be produced by a repeal of the Corn-laws. Now, when the immense weight of the burthen of general taxation was considered; when it was borne in mind what would be effected for the country by a reduction of taxation; when, too, it was recollected that the great bulk of these taxes was raised from the consumer, 17,000,000*l.* accruing from the Excise alone, what argument of force could be adduced against the reduction of expenditure by cheapening the price of bread, accompanied as that must necessarily be by an increase of consumption. There were many imposts which ought to be reduced, or taken off—where the claims on the consideration of the Legislature were very strong. Take the case of the post-horse duty. The utmost anxiety had been evinced that this impost should be taken off, because those who paid it were in the course of being ruined by the changes effected by the great improvements lately made in the internal communication of the country. The sufferers by these changes, however, did not when they were about to be made, come to the Legislature for protection against the locomotive engines, or against the railroads, alleging that they had invested large capital in their business, and that they were unfitted for other business, but they sought relief because they found that the tax now pressed unequally on them. But if the Corn-laws were repealed the keep of their horses would not cost them what it now did, and they would better be enabled to bear what now almost prevented them from exercising their trade. To take another and a greater matter in which the public interests are involved, the Post-office. It had long been desired to effect a most important alteration in rates of postage—one that would afford the public an advantage more to be wished for, perhaps, than almost any which it was in the power of the Legislature to grant. What was the obstacle to the immediate adoption of this arrangement? The difficulty of withdrawing from the revenue the difference which would be hazarded by the adoption of the new plan. The amount that might be saved in those branches of the public expenditure to which he had referred, by reducing the cost of provisions would enable the Government in all probability, to consult the wishes and interests of the public in regard to the transmission of letters at a low and fixed rate. Did the opponents of repeal imagine that the people would not soon detect all these things. Did they suppose that now the attention of the public was aroused, calculations would not be made of the amount paid for the public service over and above what would be necessary, under a system of non-restriction? Was it supposed that the public would disregard a state of things which, while it much increased the taxation of the country, at the same time deprived them of great and much sought advantages. To turn, also, to the effect of these restrictive laws on the shipping interest. If any hon. Members connected with that interest were present, they would be able to inform the House, with more accuracy than he (Mr. Villiers) could. What were the injuries inflicted on the shipping interest by means of the Corn-laws. For his own part, he thought that one of the most striking arguments in favour of repeal of these laws was founded upon their injury to the shipping interest. They suffered, not only by the increased cost of provisions for their ships, but also by being deprived of the useful business of conveying the foreign grain, which, under a different state of things, would be consumed in this country. An illustration of these evils came under his notice a short time since, at Hamburg. He there saw ships lading with grain, the provisions for which had been purchased at from forty-five to fifty per cent. less than the English merchants could have purchased them at home. And whither did the House think those ships were bound? They were actually conveying to our own colonies—to Newfoundland in particular—flour that had been ground at Hamburg; ground, too, at mills that were erected there in consequence of the rejection of the measure introduced by the hon. Member for Dartmouth, for facilitating the grinding of corn in bond in this country for the purpose of exportation. Why, what would any stranger think of the intelligence of England, if he were told that a law, that thus drove capital from our shores and deprived it of profitable employment, was for the protection of productive industry, or if he were further told, on asking how we contrived to support such vast establishments for the public service, and the weight of so enormous a debt; a debt larger than those of all other civilised nations put together; (the debt of the East India Company included;) he were to be told, "Why, the only way in which we bear the existing burdens of the country is by creating and maintaining another burden of still greater magnitude?" Yet such was substantially the argument of those who argued that the maintenance of the Corn-laws was necessary, in order to enable us to collect the interest of the national debt. Their position was this:—"We have already two great burdens on the country—the national debt, and the expenditure necessary for the public service; and the only way in which we can support these two burdens is by creating a third, by causing the price of food to be high in order to swell the fortunes of the landed aristocracy." But was this wise, just, or honest legislation, to limit the resources of the nation, in order to enable a particular class to contribute their share to the common burthens? The Corn-laws might rob A to benefit B, but they did not create wealth; they did not benefit the public generally; and when it was borne in mind that, in order to afford the exclusive protection to one class, we were ruining the manufactures and contracting the commerce of the country, it was surely time for the Legislature to interpose, and to consider whether the danger and national loss that would accrue from the contraction of the commerce of the country would not be much greater than any that could possibly arise out of a repeal of the Corn-laws. How could we meet our national engagements, and support the public burdens; how could the credit of the country be maintained, were it not for our foreign trade? By our foreign commerce it was, that we had been enabled to support the expense of the long war that gave rise to the debt; by our commerce it was, that we had been enabled to maintain the public credit under the burdens which that debt imposed upon us; and by the freedom and extension of our commerce it would be, that we should ultimately, if ever, be enabled to clear ourselves from debt. The maintenance and extension of the commerce of the country, then, ought to supersede all other considerations. How were the twenty-two millions collected from the customs, if not through the employment of the capital of the manufacturer? Did we export the produce of the soil? How then were the imports procured, if not in exchange for our exported manufactures? Yet the landed interest and those who supported the existing Corn-laws were endeavouring to underrate as well as undermine our commerce. For his own part, he believed, that but for the restraints which the Corn-laws had imposed on the industrious energy of the country, we should almost have been able to discharge our public debt, and to have indefinitely extended our commerce. It required such a scheme as the Corn-laws to check our career of commercial prosperity; and the promoters of them had accomplished this object. They had lowered the price of labour, and made food in particular countries as it were a mere drug in the market, while they had raised the price of it at home: they had thus offered a premium to foreigners to engage their capital in manufactures, and, if they persevered, a great evil already felt by us would continue, and the capital and the artisans of this country would be yearly leaving it in greater numbers, and in larger amount than they now were. On the other hand, he was satisfied, if the laws were now repealed, the progress of the existing evils would be checked—English capital would be prevented from leaving the country, and what was still more important to us, fresh capital would not be further invested in manufactures abroad, because the demand from our market for agricultural produce would give employment to their capital in agriculture. The price of labour would be raised, and the foreign manufacturers would no longer have the advantage of superabundant labour at a *minimum* price. One most important consideration in connection with the present agitation of the question was, that there was now perhaps, just time to correct this the greatest error into which this or any other country so circumstanced had fallen; he alluded to the circumstance, that the tariffs of the German league and those of the United States both ceased in 1841. In that year the states united in that league were to re-assemble, with the view of determining whether they should remain united; and it would much depend on the arrangements we were ready to make as to receiving the produce of these countries, how far the tariff to which they would then agree would be prejudicial or favourable to our commerce. If, in the mean time, we could prepare for the vast advantage (to ourselves) of receiving their timber and their grain free from restrictions, we should not only check the investment of their capital in home manufactures, an operation that was rapidly progressing under the system of mutual exclusion, but we should recover their markets for our manufactures. Again, as regarded the United States: our conduct with respect to the restrictive duties would determine American capitalists in the course they would adopt—whether they would invest their capital in agriculture, in order to supply the demand of our market, or whether they would persevere in their home manufactures. Surely, then, when we consider the enormous advantages, political and commercial, that would accrue from a renewal of our relations with the north of Europe and the United States on the solid ground of mutual commercial interest—advantages which it is almost impossible to exaggerate—it was time for the Legislature to take such steps as would accomplish that object and avert the injury which our commerce must eventually sustain if the system now pursued by foreign states were continued. A more important object than the extension of our relations with foreign nations, based on commercial interests, could not be. No one could deny that it was more reasonable to expect the preservation of peace, the safety of our commerce, and the prosperity of our own manufactures, by interesting the productive and industrious classes of other countries in our favour—by opening to them a road to wealth by our means—than from adding to our navy, or by making treaties, or by forming merely personal alliances with foreign princes. He, therefore, could not conceive a more useful occupation for the minister who presided over the trade of the country, and the minister who had the charge of the foreign department, than to devote their whole energy and attention to extend the commercial dependence of ourselves and other countries. They would not only have the effect of increasing the wealth of the country, but would also tend materially to allay the apprehensions that gave rise to so anxiety, lest the peace and security of our foreign possessions should be disturbed. We were constantly alarmed by intimations that the northern Powers were opposed to our interests and policy. Why, there could not be a better opportunity than the present for conciliating Prussia, one of those Powers. He was convinced that, if we now were in a situation to offer to establish commercial intercourse between this country and Prussia, upon the basis of non-restriction, the government of Prussia could no more resist the influence of the people of that country against what they felt to be their interest, than the general government of the United States were able to influence the inhabitants of South Carolina to assent to their tariff. The allowing all men to exchange the fruits of their capital and industry where they could get the utmost of what they desired in return, was the best possible security for contentment at home and permanent tranquility abroad. The adoption of that principle would be a great mark of that progressive civilization which all men looked to with interest and with hope, while the resistance to it showed them still under the dominion of that unreflecting selfishness which had in all ages marred, and which continued to mar all human improvement. He had now arrived at that portion of the question, which was the least satisfactory to him to consider—namely, the obstacle which was presented in this country to the adoption of a wise policy. Now, this was not merely whispered in this House or only surmised elsewhere, but it was broadly and openly stated wherever persons not directly interested in the maintenance of the monopoly were assembled, that the landholders of the country were the persons who were really opposed to the repeal of the Corn-laws—that they were in possession of the Legislature of the country, where their authority was complete and uncontrolled—that they believed themselves to have a direct influence in the maintenance of those laws, and that nothing but actual fear would induce them to consent to their repeal: and they could not conceal from themselves what was every where said, that if the working classes had been less anxious about the shadow than the substance, the Legislature might at the present moment be acting under the most degrading influence to which men who had a public duty to perform could be subject to—namely, the influence of fear. He would be the last to desire that such an influence should be brought to bear upon the Legislature. But, in the absence of fear, it was lamentable to think that the landed interest, who predominate in this House, would only do justice to the people, by being assured, that they could do so without any sacrifice to themselves. In the mean time, however, the people had an undoubted right to hear distinctly from the landowners of this country the grounds on which they professed to maintain the Corn-laws. If it was on the ground of local taxation, will they submit to an inquiry into that fact, and abide by the result. If it was from the pressure of general taxation, which they could prove to be exclusive, then let them at once say whether they were prepared to give up their monopoly for a commutation of taxes. Whatever the grounds were, the public were entitled to have them now specifically stated. If the pressure of local taxationwas alleged, then he had a point fromwhich he could start in discussing that matter, and he would refer to what fell from one of the most intelligent, and, on this subject, one of the best informed of his party—the right hon. Baronet, the Member for Pembroke. The right hon. Gentleman, on a former occasion, stated, that his assent to the protective policy was in concurrence with the policy which left a portion of the local taxation to be borne by the landed aristocracy. And, in the discussion on the Malt-tax, the right hon. Baronet said, that he felt that if the new Poor-law continued in operation, if tithes were commuted, if the expense of county prosecutions were charged on the public funds, there would then be nothing left but the Malt-tax to justify the maintenance and continuance of the Corn-laws; and that if the Malt-tax were reduced or taken off, repeal of the Corn-laws might be irresistibly urged on the House of Commons. These were the sentiments of the right hon. Baronet; he presumed, therefore, he was justified in considering them as the sentiments of the supporters of the Corn-laws generally; and, consequently, that the Malt-tax was the only ground on which the continuance of the Corn-laws was justified. The other conditions named by the right hon. Baronet had been certainly fulfilled; the Poor-law had reduced the rates sixty per cent.; the expense of criminal prosecutions had been transferred from the counties to the consolidated fund, and the tithes had been commuted. And now he would ask the right hon. Gentleman, whether he did intend to contend, that the Malt-tax, of four millions and a half, which if it fell at all, which he denied, fell indirectly on the landed interest, was any indemnity to the public for the enormous loss they sustained from the existence of the Corn-laws? Again, if it did do, on what principle was it, he would ask, that because the consumer did not consume barley enough to satisfy the landed interest, that therefore they were to tax his bread in order to enable him to consume more. Was ever such a policy, moreover, recognized, that because there existed a tax on one thing, there should, therefore, be a tax on half dozen other things to indemnify the persons affected by the former one? If any protection were wanted on account of the tax on malt, the natural and corresponding indemnity would be to lay a tax on foreign barley, or on foreign malt, not on foreign wheat, oats, or rye, &c. And were foreign malt and foreign barly not taxed? But he had taken the statement of the right hon. Baronet for granted, as being in accordance with the sentiments of the party of which he was so distinguished a member—not thinking it necessary to heed much the arguments or assertions of others who knew less of the matter, he therefore concluded, that the malt-tax was the only obstacle to the repeal of the Corn-laws. If, then, the right hon. Baronet truly represented the opinions of the landed interest on this question, would they be willing, he would ask, if the malt-tax were taken off, to release the country from the tax of the Corn-laws? For, of this he was sure, that all those who were now injured by the existence of the monopoly, which he might term the community at large, would be ready—nay, be anxious—to get rid of it by acceding to those terms. The produce of the malt-tax would be lost to the revenue, no doubt, but he was perfectly satisfied that the public credit would not be endangered, but strengthened by the fetters on the industry and commerce of the country being removed. Four millions and a half was a small sum, indeed, compared with what might be raised through the medium of taxation, if the energy of the country were allowed its full and natural play. If the landed interest were not prepared to agree to this compromise, then it became them at once to declare on what terms they were disposed to give up the monopoly of the Corn-laws. If there was to be a compromise on this question, he could not conceive any that would be politic, which was not based on compensation, or commutation of taxes; but were the landholders really entitled to either compensation or commutation? Could they claim compensation like the slave-owners?—or did they complain that they were unfairly taxed? Whatever they were fairly entitled to, it was the interest of the country to concede. His objection to this Corn-law, or any other law for the same purpose, was, that it was perpetuating a great evil to the country, feeling sure, as he did, that no interest ever required protection until it was unable to support itself; and to bolster and prop up a particular interest by law at the expense of the public, when it has ceased to be independent of such aid, is to inflict a permanent injury on the community. If there be a question of compensation let it be entered upon at once and without delay. If there was any ground of claim now, to postpone inquiry would be but adding to the evil. Twenty years hence such claims would be still stronger; interests not known now would then have grown into existence. Believing, as he did, that land must always have great value in this country, he did not hesitate to declare his conviction, that if the discontinuance of the monopoly could be attained, it would be a bargain if the country were to purchase every one of the acres which the landed interest declared would be thrown out of cultivation, and if we were to support, at the public expense, every labourer who, it was said, would be thrown out of employ. But he would venture to suggest to hon. Gentlemen opposite, that it was treading on somewhat delicate ground for them to plead exclusive taxation as a reason for the maintenance of the Corn-laws, because, if an inquiry were gone into, whether they were more or less taxed than other classes, it would raise the question of what exemptions from taxation they now had, and whether, in fact, there is a country in the world where the property of the soil was less exclusively taxed than in this. One fact alone he would state to show the sort of inquiry they would subject themselves to—that 50,000,000*l.* had been paid out of personal property since the imposition of the probate and legacy duty, not one sixpence of which had been paid by the landed interest. That, since the peace, thirteen millions had been paid, under similar circumstances, on other taxes, in which the landed interest bore no share. He could name a list of taxes, including those on horses, servants, houses, dogs, insurance, the auction duty, and other duties, all of which the landed interest were freed from the payment of; all which was a great injustice to the rest of the community. When also they considered, and he thought that they were bound to consider it as matter of great importance, that prohibition was enforced as to the importation into this country of animal food (for the importation of beef, mutton, and other raw animal produce was actually prohibited), he believed, the House would agree with him that there was a very large balance of exclusive taxation, but not exactly on the side of the landed interest. It was not his business to inquire what would be the probable extent to which the landlords would suffer in the reduction of rent by a repeal of the Corn-laws, for when he saw the enormous loss which the community sustained by the continuance of these laws, it was his care only that this loss should cease. But the landlords might know, that great exaggerations were put forth as to the effect, that the importation of foreign wheat would have on the price in the English market, or rather on their incomes. He had made inquiries as to the price at which wheat could be imported if the ports were opened, and, he believed now, that there was little real difference of opinion on that point. He had learned, that in the Channel Islands they exported all their agricultural produce to this country, and all the wheat and other corn they consumed, they imported from the Baltic. He found that the difference in the price of produce in this country and in the Channel Islands varied in eighteen years only about twenty-nine or thirty per cent. This difference varied in proportion as this country imported wheat from the Continent. But, Sir, if it should only be a difference of thirty per cent. in the price of grain, when it is imported free into Guernsey, as compared with what it is sold for here, I ask why the community here are to pay that thirty per cent., if it could be saved to them; and can it be thought that they would do so if the question was thoroughly understood? Is it in keeping with the present day for the public to submit to an impost of this kind, unless assured of its necessity? I really ask the landlords of this country if they see no sign in the present times that should make them pause before they determine to maintain a system opposed by the industry, the commerce, the intelligence, and the numbers of the country, and which they cannot, beyond a limited time, expect to retain? Are they blind, moreover, to the fact that the people, who now are chiefly demanding the repeal of these laws, are those who have hitherto placed confidence in the present Legislature, and have relied on its adequacy to redress their wrongs, and reform the abuses, of which they complained? and can they suppose that these are so weak in purpose, or so meek in mind, that they will sit down quietly under disappointment and rebuff, or be diverted from the obvious reflection, that they have misplaced their confidence in this House; or that in vindication of their opinion, and under a sense of wrong, they will not call for those changes in the constitution of the Legislature which will place it more in unison with the general interests? Surely then, it is matter of serious consideration for the landowners to determine whether they will, for the paltry profit which these laws can afford them, forfeit the respect and esteem of large classes of their fellow subjects, and place in jeopardy that great social and political station which, though accident has conferred upon them, it would yet be in their power by conduct to confirm; and I must say, if they should determine after all that has been said on this subject—after all the important consequences which have been traced to this law—now to refuse to take it into consideration, that they will be adopting a course, the importance and responsibility of which they cannot estimate. I now move, Sir, that the House resolve itself into a Committee of the whole House, to take into consideration the Act 9 Geo. 4th, regulating the importation of foreign grain.

Sir *George Strickland*, in seconding the motion, commenced by remarking, that the party who had so long in that House supported the Corn-laws, did not now seem perfectly united among themselves; and some of them appeared to be receding from the high ground which they once occupied, and to admit, that the Corn-laws were, after all, not founded in absolute wisdom. The farmers throughout the country were beginning to ask the question, how far these laws had been for their advantage. He considered these laws unjust, because they gave protection to one part of the community at the expense of the great body of the community, and were thus contrary to sound national policy. The manufacturing interests represented that as corn in this country varied to 70*s*. a quarter and upwards, whereas upon the shores of the Baltic the price was from 30*s*. to 40*s*., a great advantage was given to foreign manufacturers: that our hosiery was displaced by the manufacturers of Saxony, and that our Sheffield manufacturers, instead of their trade advancing, as from the increasing population of the country and from our extended connections with foreign states, we had a right to expect, were at a stand; and they had pointed out to the attention of the House that merchants were at this moment importing hardware goods from the Continent, for the purpose of re-exporting them from this country. He would also wish to draw the attention of the House to the fact, that that which had formerly been the great staple manufacture of this country, he meant the woollen manufacture, was at present in the most depressed state. In the year 1820, there were exported from this country to Russia, 5,400,000 yards of woollen cloth; at this time there is not exported to Russia, one single yard of woollen cloth. What was the inference to be drawn from this circumstance? Why, the inference was obvious, that the manufacturers of the Continent were enabled to produce a woollen cloth of equal quality to that produced by our manufacturers, and at such a reduced price as totally to exclude us from those markets, which we had hitherto been accustomed to supply. What was the statement of Mr. Porter, who was a very high authority on those subjects? He says, that the more he looks at the present policy, the less does he like to think of it; and he goes on to point out the application of what he says, by showing that while we have an increase in population, there is every symptom of a decrease in the manufacturers—a decrease in the means of industry and subsistence. The great manufacturing class of this country considered themselves in danger at this moment—they felt that there was a cloud hanging over them, and if that cloud should burst, all the manufacturers of the country would be overwhelmed by the torrent; and if the manufacturing interest fell, in the end the agricultural interest must perish also. He would now address a few words to the House as to the effects which he conceived the Corn-laws had produced, and were likely to produce on the landed interest. He well recollected what took place at the passing of those laws in the year 1815—at that time there was a great excitement of the public mind on the subject, and he well recollected the loud clamour of the people for cheap food. At that time there was a persevering determination actuating the great majority of that House and of the other House of Parliament to carry these laws, in spite of the feelings of opposition on the part of the people, indeed, it might almost be said, that in consequence of the commotions excited in London on this subject, the Corn-laws had been carried. Now, he would ask, what were the expectations and promises held out to the farmer by the promoters of these laws? It had been said by the promoters of the Corn-laws, that it was the intention of these laws to keep up the price of corn to 80*s.* a quarter, nay, they went still further—they stated that it was their intention, by these laws, to keep up the price of corn to the utmost extent, and that they had no idea that the price would ever fall so low as 80*s.* a quarter. Now, he would ask, had the promises thus made to the farmer been ever realised—what had been the fate of the farmer since these laws were passed? He would wish to draw the attention of the House for a few moments to the statement he was about to make as to how these laws had worked. For three years after the passing of the Corn-laws in 1815, the prices had been high. In 1817 the price of wheat was what would now be considered a famine price. Wheat was 94*s.* a quarter. In 1818 wheat was 83*s.* a quarter. The promoters of the Corn-laws said, at that time, that these laws had completely effected their object, and they prided themselves on their success, but he would wish to compare the then state with what followed. Year after year, from that period, the price of corn fell. The price of corn fell to 77*s.* 76*s.* 66*s.* 60*s.* per quarter. In 1828, the price of wheat was 60*s.* a quarter. In 1829, it was 66*s.* a quarter; in 1830, it was 44*s.* a quarter. In 1831, it was 66*s.* a quarter. In 1835, it was 39*s.* a quarter. He would, therefore, ask the supporters of this law, how the promise had been kept to the farmer, that the price of wheat would never fall below 80*s.* a quarter? But the melancholy part of the story was this, that while the price of wheat fell, the rents were kept up to their fullest extent. Year after year, had the landlord been striving to keep up his rent, until the landholder at last was obliged to acknowledge, that it was impossible he could obtain the full amount of his rent. At this period the landlord had recourse to a most disgraceful expedient. He made a semblance of returning that portion of the rent which he could not get, but continued the liability of the farmers to the full amount of rent, instead of consenting to enter into a new arrangement with him on the subject. What was the consequence?—why, that hundreds and thousands of farmers, without any fault which could be attached to them were, year after year, brought down from affluence to beggary, relying on the promises which had been made to them. The unfortunate farmer, after having paid as rent all his profits and interest—paid all his capital also—and the whole of his property passed into the pockets of his landlord. He would appeal to those who now heard him, whether they had not seen farmers, whom they had known formerly in affluence, breaking stones on the high road—whether many farmers had not been reduced to seek refuge in the poor-house—whether many had not committed suicide? He would confidently state, that such had been the case. There were countless statements in the newspapers of that time, of farmers who had been so reduced by distress that they had committed suicide; of others who had died of broken hearts, being no longer able to endure the abject misery to which they had been reduced. The more he considered this subject, the more was he convinced, that the Corn-laws had signally failed in producing the effects which they were intended to produce. The fact was, that the promoters of the Corn-laws, in their zeal for their own interest, had made a remarkable oversight, inasmuch as they had only limited the supply of corn from abroad, while they had left the home produce without limit; they had thus cut off the only source from which a regulation of price could take place. How was it to be supposed that, in a small island like this, seeing that the fluctuation of the price was regulated by the alternations of the seasons—how was it to be supposed, that in a country where the seasons were so constantly changing, producing sudden alterations from high to low prices, that it could be otherwise than excessively difficult for the farmer to say what was the amount of the rent which he could safely pay? He had no hesitation in declaring, that that system which raised the price of food to the industrious classes, in order to enrich still more the affluent, was productive of great injury to the community, was unjust in its operation, and was morally wrong, and there never was a maxim so true as that which says, that the measure which is morally wrong can never be politically right. He would, therefore, entreat the House, in the name of those whose petitions had been presented by himself and others, not to turn a deaf ear to their prayers. The Legislature on this question stood in a false position with respect to the people, which could not be maintained; it was certain that they must yield this question at last, and was it not better to do so while they were asked? There was a growing feeling throughout the country on this subject. With regard to the depressed state of our manufacturing industry, of which agriculture composes but one branch, he was convinced the best policy to relieve that depression was, the policy of free trade. In the present artificial state of society, it might be difficult to carry out these principles at once; but, in this instance, there was no reason why these principles should not be acted upon. He would make a few observations on the amendment of the hon. Member for the North Riding of Yorkshire; that amendment professed to explain the effect of the Corn-laws, and divided itself into two points. 1st. It upholds the system of Corn-laws, because it says, that in consequence of the heavy taxation of this country, it is necessary that protection should be granted to vested interests; by vested interests, he supposed the hon. Member meant the landed proprietors, and this protection was sought by the landed proprietors in consequence of the heavy taxation to which they were subjected. He was ready to meet the question, and if it could be demonstrated that the landed proprietors were subjected to any unjust share of taxation, he was ready to take the subject into consideration, and if it could be shown that the land-tax, or the poor-rate rested in unjust or unfair proportions on them, he would afford them relief, but this could not be made the excuse for resisting the prayer of the country, and checking its prosperity. He believed this to be a fallacy. He did not consider that the landed proprietor was taxed in a greater, if he was in an equal degree with a poor man; the poor man who purchased his highly-taxed commodity, was, in proportion to his means, as highly taxed as the greatest noble in the land. He would now pass to the more important part of the hon. Member's (Mr. Cayley's) amendment. It stated, that the Corn-laws afforded protection to the consumer. He should like to have that proved. He need not ask the hon. Member to dwell upon this point, more especially as he knew it to be a favourite maxim of his, that dear food was advantageous to the poor. Philosophers of his stamp argued this question unfairly, for when asked why dear food was advantageous to the poor, they said that wages followed the high prices of provisions, and that, therefore, the poor would not suffer from the high price of corn. He well knew that it was a maxim of Adam Smith, that wages in the long run must be regulated by the price of food, but the hon. Member left out the most important part of the doctrine of Adam Smith, that although wages followed the price of food, it was at an awful distance. When the price of corn was suddenly raised from 39*s.* to 80*s.*, wages had no tendency to follow this, but they followed the average of a number of years. He would call upon the hon. Member to state distinctly any instance of a labourer receiving 2*s.* a-day when corn was 40*s.* a quarter, having his wages doubled and receiving 4*s.* when corn was 80*s.* a quarter; no such thing could be proved. The able bodied labourer who could stand out thus against his master for wages, could not be considered in the light of a poor man. The able-bodied labourer receiving ample wages, possessing a cottage with his family around him, was, perhaps, the happiest of human beings, because he was exempt from care, but how was he affected by the dearness of corn? Did he not suffer in consequence? He utterly denied, that wages ever doubled as the price of corn rose. He had seen the effect of a rise in corn on such families — he had seen, that when wheat was too dear to enable them to buy the best description—they had been forced to feed their families on unwholesome bread, or to abstain from wheaten bread entirely, and use barley bread instead. He had seen agricultural labourers and their families in circumstances like these —their health gradually declining, until at length they were attacked by typhus fever, and many of them carried off. And he would ask the hon. Member to say, if he would continue to maintain his hard-hearted position, and contend, that wages followed the price of food. He would now consider for a moment the important position laid down by the hon. Gentleman that dear bread was of advantage to the poor. Who were the poor? Not the able-bodied labourers. But he would ask, what was the situation of the poor widow, who had to maintain herself on a small pittance, when a rise of corn took place? When it was doubled in price, how were persons thus situated to purchase it? Hundreds of instances might be quoted in which wages had never been raised in consequence of a rise in the price of corn. What then became of the hon. Gentleman's position, that the high price of corn, was advantageous to the poor. There were symptoms in this country at the present moment, of a wide-spread discontent among the labouring classes; he should be sorry, that any expression should drop from him which should bear the appearance of countenancing the violent language that had been used, and which, if the users of it would listen to his humble voice, nothing should induce them to repeat; but it was the duty of the Legislature to watch these symptoms. If they saw the labourers uniting in masses, choosing delegates, arming themselves, purchasing pikes, they might rest assured, that the best way of explaining this would be by a reference to the old but true maxim, that want of food was the greatest cause of discontent. If they saw such symptoms as these, they must come to the conclusion, that there was some distress and affliction among the people. In those representations which had been made, and which by some had been doubted, there was a great check to the manufacturing interests of the country. He would now conclude with one observation, and one observation only, that he hoped he should live to see the day when the landed proprietors of England — the aristocracy—the proud aristocracy of England — would look back with feelings of regret and sorrow, not unmixed with shame —that they ever filled their coffers with money by raising the price of every morsel of bread, that was eaten by the humblest

Mr. *Cayley*. Sir, Doubtless the hon. Gentleman who has introduced this motion for the consideration of the House has done it with much ability; but his ingenuity will not stand in the place of truth, and my only fear in rising to oppose him is in the reflection that the justice and merits of those views I espouse, may suffer from the deficiencies of the advocate. From the general tone of the speeches which have just been delivered I should not, had I been acquainted with the circumstances, really have been led to imagine that the Table of the House was loaded with petitions from the farmers and agricultural labourers of the country for a repeal of the Corn-laws, instead of its being the manufacturer's interest which the hon. Gentleman appeared to advocate. Where are the delegates on the present occasion? Not a word has been said of them. If their case has been remembered at all, it has been considered under the guise of a sympathy for the tenant and agricultural labourer, who, the hon. Mover, as an hypothesis, assumes must be in favor of a repeal of the Corn-laws. What is the question before the House? One for the consideration of the Corn-law Act; and yet the argument of both the hon. Gentlemen has gone directly to their total repeal. That is notoriously the object of the Anti-Corn-law delegates, and the affectation "of a consideration of the law with a view to its improvement" is nothing but a pretence. A great number of plausible arguments are used, and a great deal of sophistry is abroad on the subject of dear bread and cheap bread; but the fact is they are relative terms. The hon. Member who has just sat down has taunted me with holding the doctrine that dear bread is best for the labourer. He would have represented me more fairly if he had stated my opinion to be that, for the last twenty-five years cheap corn has made the dearest bread that the labourer has ate; because then the falling-off in his employment and wages rendered him unable to purchase it, and this he has found from his practical experience, which is worth much more than all the fancies of the hon. Gentleman. The hon. Mover has gone at great length into what he conceives to be the opinions of the agricultural labourer on the subject of Corn-laws, and what must be his condition under them; but all that he has said is pure theory—the offspring of his own preconceived notions, and as far from the feelings and situation of the labourer as any two things can possibly be: and I must say, that if I had before felt inclined to believe the speculations of the hon. Member on the manufacturing part of this question, my faith would now be at an end; for perceiving through his argument of to-day, upon how utterly visionary grounds he can build up an agricultural opinion, I can have no respect for the opinions he has come to on manufactures. If they are no sounder than those he has jumped at in agricultural matters, they must be untrue. He has referred besides to the miserable condition of the agricultural labourer in 1830, and stated that that led him to acts of insubordination. It is true it did. But what was the cause of that miserable state? the gradually falling price of corn, which so distressed the farmer, that although he for years forebore, at the sacrifice of his capital, to inflict his own privation and suffering on his labourer, at last had no resource left but to turn him off or give him less wages. This reduction of wages, from a fall in the price of corn, led to the outrages alluded to on the part of the labourer, and has left a salutary lesson on his mind. On this account scarcely a labourer of any experience in any county of England but would say, if asked, that he preferred wheat at 7*s.* 6*d.* or 8*s.* a bushel rather than at 5*s.*, and the farmer would doubtless be greatly benefitted by having sixpence taken off his rates, while 5*s.* were taken from the price of his corn. The few paupers that remain on the poor books under a remunerative price, I can state from my own knowledge, in agricultural districts cost a trifle more in nominal amount to sustain them; but their numbers are greatly diminished, from the great demand for employment, while the increased cost the farmer is in a much better condition to pay. The absolute amount of the rates has always been reduced under a remunerative price of produce. The hon. Mover has stated—as a theory, I presume, for it certainly is not a fact—that the higher the price of food, the higher are the rates. But if it were so, what then? Who pays the rates but the farmer? The hon. Mover also asks how we can advocate the Corn-laws, when it is notorious that since the Corn-laws were enacted the farmer has sffered great distress, and that the Corn-Laws have not sustained prices. No one who understood anything of the subject expected that the Corn-laws would sustain prices beyond that natural limit promoted by the internal demand and supply. The change in the value of money which took place after the war, caused a great fall in price in all commodities and in agricultural produce among the rest; that fall was interfered with occasionally by deficient seasons, and by various parliamentary measures ending with the extinction of the 1£. notes in 1829. What the agricultural interest felt with respect to the Corn-laws was this. "When prices fall in this country, either from a plentiful harvest or a diminished demand, we will prevent foreign produce coming into the market to depreciate the price still further. And when prices rise from opposite causes, the descending duties tend to give the consumer the advantage of an increased supply from abroad." Another argument which the hon. Mover has urged, with respect to the state of the farmer, consisted of a reference to the period between 1773 and 1793; and it is said that the farmer never was more flourishing in condition than during that period when Corn-laws did not exist. This statement shews how easily assertions can be made. Nothing can be more contrary to the fact. Perhaps the two periods in the history of this country when the farmers were most distressed, are ten years of this very period; viz., during the American war of Independence, and the period subsequent to the termination of the last war. The hon. Mover has also stated, on the authority of the right hon. Member for Pembroke (Sir James Graham), that the direct taxes falling on agriculture are the main ground for its protection; and that if they are reduced, the claims of the agriculturists will be proportionably diminished. No one can respect more highly than myself, the authority of that right hon. Gentleman on this subject, but I do not believe he ever based agricultural protection on so narrow a base as the direct taxation which it encounters. If he has, I must be excused for dissenting in this particular from him. In addition to local and direct taxation as a claim, I have always urged the general taxation; the employment which the raising of agricultural produce gives to the largest proportion of the community; the custom afforded to the provincial tradesmen and artisans, and through them to the manufacturers; and, lastly, (though to be considered as early as any in point of justice) the protection which is due to the property both of landlord and tenant vested in the soil. This last seems a consideration of mighty little moment in the present day, and a change of hands, is properly, a matter of sovereign indifference to those who are not to suffer under its operation; although my hon. Friend, the Member for the West Riding (Sir G. Strickland) has said, that the landholder had far better security than the holder of any other property. And this he said at the moment he was proposing to rob him of a great part of his security. Secured! Why, the landholder ought to be secured—he consents to receive two and a half and three per cent. for his capital, while others are receiving from five to thirty per cent. This capital has been invested on the faith of Corn-laws, which have existed for many centuries; and it would be the grossest injustice to deprive him of the protection he derived from them. The hon. Mover, indeed, has spoken very readily of making compensation to the classes who would be affected by a repeal of these laws; but is the hon. Gentleman aware of how large a bill there would be made out against him? The value of the property invested in the soil of England and Ireland, amounts at a low estimate, to 50,000,000*l.* per annum, which, at thirty years' purchase, would amount to no less a sum than 1,500,000,000*l.* for the landlords. The capital of the tenants may, in like manner, be taken very fairly at 250,000,000*l.*, giving 1,000*l.* for every 200*l.* yearly rent. Deducting twenty-five per cent. from these sums, and from 100,000,000*l.* paid in agricultural labour, and giving ten years' security for the wages of the latter, there would be a sum of 690,000,000*l.* which the hon. Member would have to pay as a compensation for depriving the agricultural class of the Corn-laws. Before I proceed to enter more particularly on the question, I will state what the course is, which I intend to pursue. It had been my purpose to move as an amendment on the motion the following resolutions:—

1. That, under the heavy debt and taxation of this country, its productive industry and vested interests require to be protected from the lightly taxed produce and cheaper labour of foreign countries.

2. That the existing Corn-law, by the protection it has afforded to the grower of corn under low prices, and to the consumer of it under high, has essentially answered the purposes of its enactment.

But as representations have been made to me from both sides of the House of the inconvenience of such an amendment; I shall waive my individual wish, and content myself by meeting the motion by a direct negative. At the same time I should wish, if it could be so arranged, to take a subsequent division on the principle of my first amendment. I will now proceed to the question before the House. In opposing the motion of the hon. Member for Wolverhampton, I should wish distinctly to state that I am by no means actuated by any feeling of hostility towards the manufacturing body generally or towards that part of the manufacturing body in whose behalf the hon. Gentleman appears on this occasion. No one more respects them than I do. Feeling as I do so entirely the identity of interests which exists between the agricultural and manufacturing classes, at least between those of them who deal with each other, it is impossible that for one moment such a feeling of hostility should be entertained by me. When, however, I state my opinion of the identity of interests between the manufacturing and agricultural classes, I must be understood to limit myself to the period when they exchanged their respective produce with each other. For the sake of argument, I will suppose that the inhabitants of a particular village, the blacksmith, shoemaker, tailor, and grocer, were in the habit of deriving their custom from the farmers of that village, and of purchasing their agricultural produce from the farmers in return. Suppose the miller who is, as it were, the distributor between these parties, after having bought the corn of the farmers of this village for a length of time, should take it into his head to purchase his corn from the farmers of the next village; the artisans and shopkeepers of the first village might, for the moment, suppose that if this corn from the next village could be procured at some trifling degree less of expense, they would receive a corresponding degree of immediate benefit; but when the farmers of the first village, deprived of their custom for their corn, ceased to employ the artisan and tradesman of they village, these last would then discover that they had destroyed those very parties on whom they themselves depended for the livelihood they had obtained. In this instance there would most undoubtedly exist an identity of interest between the tradesmen and farmers of this particular village for the time they dealt with each other; but that identity of interest would cease if the tradesmen could continue to purchase agricultural produce from other quarters; and if their own farmers had no other outlet for their produce. The interests of Liverpool and Manchester are at present strictly identified with those of the productive classes generally of this country, and especially of the farmers; but if they insist upon no longer dealing with the British farmer, but on dealing with the farmers of Prussia and Russia in his place, the identity of interest ceases to exist, and should their present desire for a free import of low-priced grain succeed, the large population hitherto dependent on the cultivation of British corn must to a great extent be thrown out of employment. Those who advocate this entire freedom of trade, the free importation of foreign corn, have taken great pains to depreciate the condition, and the capacity of British agriculture. They complain of the ignorance of the British farmer, and of his views with respect to foreign commerce; but they exhibit on their part a tenfold greater ignorance of the state of the agriculture of their own country, as compared with that of foreign countries. The business of a farmer is not easily learned; it is one which requires long training and much experience; and ignorant as the farmer may be in the estimation of the political economists, I will venture to say that the farmer would learn the trade of a manufacturer in one year, better than the manufacturer would learn the trade of a farmer in ten years. Much as this country is celebrated, and justly celebrated, for its manufactures, its shipping, its docks, its bridges, its canals, its railways, and its turnpike roads, it is even more pre-eminent—and I speak on the authority of those well qualified to judge —for the advances which it has made in agricultural pursuits. In the draining of marshes and in making embankments to keep out great waters, the Dutch are superior to us. Belgium, in a sort of horticultural farming, may challenge comparison with any thing to be found in England. The Germans have cultivated the article of fine wool more assiduously and successfully than Spain did formerly. Irrigation is practised with more minute economy and effect in Persia, Italy, and Switzerland. The Arabs and Turcomans breed horses which, for fleetness and power of enduring fatigue, may be superior to the English race-horse; but in a combination of what is requisite to the preparation and cultivation of the land—to the breeding, rearing, and improvement of cattle—in the operations of the dairy, and especially in the kind of tillage necessary to the rarely failing produce of heavy crops of corn, it must be admitted that England stands pre-eminent. The manufacturers have to boast of their Arkwrights, their Peels, their Watts; but neither are the agriculturists wanting in names which have conduced to successful and skilful operations in agriculture. They have their Townsends, their Bedfords, their Cokes, their Westerns, their Spensers, their Grahams, and a multitude of others, less elevated in station and less generally known, but equally distinguished in those particular districts which have so much benefited by their energy and skill. The economists talk of the poor soils of this country as if the soil in Britain were less productive or less rich than the soils of other countries. It is true that agriculturists themselves have often spoken of the poorer soils of this country as unable to withstand the pressure of taxation, in combination with a low range of prices; but that statement has only been in comparison with other lands of greater fertility and produce. What is the information derived from Mr. Jacob's report on the corn trade? Why, that the average return of wheat, oats, barley, and rye is four for one in Prussia, while in Britain the average is eight for one. That Gentleman also states that the stock of sheep and cattle in proportion to the surface, is at least four times greater in Britain than in Prussia. Why, then, could not England, with this superior state of agriculture, compete with the agriculture of Prussia, which is relatively so inferior? Because of the pressure of taxation, and of the charges upon it, being so high compared with the taxation and charges upon agriculture in foreign countries. In the first place take the National Debt in Great Britain, and compare it with that of other countries:—

		Proportion of Debt at per head.		
		£		
Great Britain .	£800,000,000	32	0	0
France . .	194,400,000	5	19	7
Russia . .	35,550,000	0	11	9
Austria . .	78,100,000	2	7	6
Prussia . .	29,701,000	2	7	7
Netherlands .	148,500,000	23	5	5
Spain . .	70,000,000	5	0	8
United States :	—	—		
Sicilies . .	18,974,000	2	11	2
Bavaria . .	11,311,000	2	16	0
Sardinia . .	4,584,000	1	1	2
Turkey . .	3,667,000	0	7	8
Sweden . .	—	—		
Portugal . .	5,649,000	1	2	6

Denmark	3,729,000	1	18	4
Rome	17,142,000	7	9	0
Poland	5,740,000	1	3	3
Saxony	3,300,000	2	9	1
Hanover	2,384,000	1	11	0
Baden	1,670,000	1	9	2
Wurtemburg	2,505,000	1	12	7
Tuscany	1,384,000	1	4	11
Hesse (Darmstadt)	1,184,000	1	3	11
Hesse (Electorate)	220,000	0	6	1
Switzerland	—	—		
Norway	252,000	0	3	10
East India Company's territories	47,609,000	0	9	0

The National Debt of this country thus appeared to be about as large as the debts of all the other countries in the world put together. And the interest of this debt, amounting to 30,000,000*l.* per annum, it must be remembered, is a fixed payment, not varying with prices and the incomes of individuals, but one which has to be paid whether the price is high or low, and, of course, out of a low price, it leaves so much less for the producer, and frequently has left nothing at all. It is a clog upon every species of production in the country, and unless the producer has some species of protection as a set-off against this incumbrance, his foreign competitor has, to this extent, an unfair advantage over him. Then take the taxation levied in this country on some articles of ordinary consumption as thus:—Malt, 2*s.* 7*d.* per bushel; Wine, 4*s.* 10*d.* to 7*s.* 3*d.* per gallon (wine measure); Brandy and Geneva, 18*s.* 9*d.* per ditto; Rum, 7*s.* 1*d.* per ditto; British Spirits, 3*s.* to 3*s.* 6*d.* per gallon; Sugar, 24*s.* per cwt.; Tea, 96*l.* to 100*l.* per cent.; Coffee, 6*d.* per lb.; Tobacco, 3*s.* per ditto; Hard Soap, 3*d.* per ditto; Hops, 2*d.* per ditto; Pepper, 1*s.* per ditto. Can we be surprised that this amount of taxation on articles of consumption should raise their price, and that this higher price should require a higher rate of wages and of other produce? The taxes which fall directly on our agriculture are mainly the poor-rates, the highway, church, and county-rates, the land-tax, the malt-tax, the duties on spirits, on stamps, of sales, of mortgages, leases, besides the prevention of the growth of some species of produce such as tobacco, beet-root for sugar, &c. Now, let us see what was the effect of the taxation on malt, and I will first take coffee as an illustration of how consumption is affected by alterations in the duty. In 1795, the consumption of coffee being about 1,300,000 lbs., the duty was raised from 6*d.* to 1*s.* 1*d.* The result was, that in 1796, the consumption fell off to 396,053 lbs. In 1809 there was a diminution of the duty and the result was:—the consumption, 1808, 1,069,691 lbs.; 1809, 9,251,837 lbs.—increase 800 per cent. from a change in the duties. There was another change of duty in 1825; the consumption being—1824, 7,993,040 lbs.; 1825, 10,766,112 lbs. And the last change, bringing this article within the reach of the working class, the consumption in 1832 became 22,452,000 lbs. The changes in the duties on spirits produced the same results of a great increase in the consumption. In 1823, the duty on Irish spirits was reduced from 5*s.* 6*d.* per imperial gallon, to 2*s.* 10*d.* In 1822, the consumption was 2,328,387 gallons; in 1825, 9,262,744 gallons. In the articles of tobacco, tea, and sugar, equal effects have been produced by a change in the duties. So in malt. The repeal of the beer duty increased the consumption of malt, as the imposition of the malt duty had always diminished the consumption of it. In 1835, 33,000,000 bushels of malt were consumed (equivalent to about 29,000,000 bushels of barley), which, averaging the produce of barley land at four quarters per acre, would require about 1,000,000 acres for their growth. Now, if the duty were repealed, we might fairly expect the consumption to be trebled, which would require either 2,000,000 additional acres, or the price of barley would rise in proportion. The statement of the malt consumed in England and Wales runs thus:—

	Quarters.
Annual consumption: average of ten years duty, ending 1723, duty 6*d.* per bushel ..	3,542,000
Ditto, 1823, duty 2*s.* 7*d.* per bushel	3,182,776
Decreased consumption ..	359,224

	Malt per Head. Gallons.
Population, first period, 5,500,000	41
Ditto, second period, 12,000,000	16
Decrease	25

The effect of the local taxation on agriculture was well illustrated by an intelligent witness before the Agricultural Committee of the House of Commons in 1836, Mr. Evan David, who gave an account from books kept by his father and himself, of the comparative condition of the farmer, on the same land, in 1790 and 1834. The following are the results as to labour, expenses, and rates :—

1834 higher than 1790.	Per Cent.
Agricultural labour	46
Carpenters' work	77
Smiths' work	66
Sadlers' work	63
Thatchers' work	58
Masons' work	66
HOUSEHOLD EXPENSES.	
Tea, sugar, candles, malt, &c.	30
Shoemakers' work	64
Tailors' work	55
Coopers' work	73
Domestic servants and education	66
LOCAL TAXES.	
Poor-rates	116
Highway-rates	200
County-rates	550
Church-rates	700

Here is at once a practical contradiction to the theories entertained by the economists, that taxation does not operate on the cost of production. It is true that the effects of taxation on production might have been met by pinching the labourer and screwing down his wages; but this cold blooded scheme was never for a moment contemplated by the agricultural interest; they had, instead, raised up the means of the labourer to a level with the expenses consequent upon taxation. With reference to tithes, although they ought not in strictness to be taken into consideration as between two capitalists embarking, the one say in manufactures, the other in the agriculture of the country, because the effect of tithe is taken into consideration in the purchase, and a less amount of money paid, still in a comparison between this country and another, the tithes must be taken into consideration, because the powers of the English farmer are saddled and burdened with this weight, over and above the burdens of the foreign agriculturist; and he is, to that extent, under a disadvantage, and disabled from the competition. These are the main reasons why the agricultural interest of this country cannot compete with the lowly taxed productions, and low priced labour of foreign farmers. But is this country, because it is higher taxed, and gives a higher rate of wages, to be ruined by foreign competition, and sacrificed to a party and a class, which, however useful in their respective positions, has no right, as a great minority of the people, or in justice, to claim any such sacrifice at the hands of the agriculturists? I do not wish to draw the comparison invidiously; but I am compelled to make the comparison by the misrepresentations which have been made respecting the comparative population and importance of the agricultural and manufacturing classes of this country. It has been repeatedly stated, that this is a mere landowners' question, that the landowners are the only persons interested in the support of this monopoly, and that the landowners consist of a body of only 30,000, and that it is monstrous that to these 30,000, should be sacrificed the best interests of the country. Now, in the first place, the landowners of this country, according to the property-tax returns, are nearly 600,000 in number: and the population, directly and indirectly, connected with the agriculture of the country is, as I have stated three or four years ago—and that statement I have since found fully corroborated by that distinguished statistician, Mr. Marshall—amounted to five-sixths of the whole population. I stated it on these grounds, taken from the Population Returns of 1831 for England, Scotland, and Wales :—

Agricultural occupiers	1,500,000
Agricultural labourers	4,800,000
Mining interest	600,000
	6,900,000
Manufacturers	2,400,000
Millers, bakers, and butchers	900,000
Artificers, builders, &c.	650,000
Tailors, shoemakers, and hatters	1,080,000
Shopkeepers	2,100,000
Clerical, legal, and medical	450,000
Disabled paupers	110,000
Proprietors, annuitants	1,116,398
	6,406,398

Now, taking the manufacturers at 2,400,000 in round numbers, as one-third of the 6,900,000 agriculturists and miners, I apportion the 6,406,398 individuals last mentioned as interested in, or employed, two-thirds by the agriculturists, and one-third by manufacturers. This will add

4,077,000 to the agriculturists, and 2,316,000 to the manufacturers; making 10,977,000 agriculturists, and 4,716,000 manufacturers. But of this number of manufacturers, half, at least, are employed (it is generally said four-fifths) by the agricultural body and its dependencies; this will deduct 2,358,000 from the aggregate manufacturing interest, and leave only 2,358,000 as the purely, or rather export, manufacturing body, whilst it makes the agricultural body and its dependencies amount to 13,335,000. But, here, Ireland is left out of the question, which may be called a strictly agricultural country—Ireland, whose very existence almost depends on supplying us with corn. Add 8,000,000, the population of Ireland, to the above 13,335,000 you have a total of 21,335,000 as the real agricultural interest of Great Britain and Ireland, compared with not more than 3,000,000, at the outside, of the export trade. And the whole of this body of 21,000,000 is interested in a remunerating price for agricultural produce: and yet we hear nothing but " monopoly," when anything is said of protection to agriculture. If it be a monopoly, the monopolists are 21,000,000 out of 24,000,000; and it will be difficult for the minority to persuade them out of the monopoly. With this mass of the people interested in it, can this be called a mere landlord's question? In point of property it is a landlord and tenant's question, but in point of employment, and wages, and custom, it is a labourer's and tradesman's question. Ireland, too, whose landlords have lately taken on themselves the payment of poor-rates and of tithes, was as capable of supplying us with agricultural productions as any country in the world; and even at the present day took 15,000,000*l.* of our goods and sent us 17,000,000*l.* worth back of her produce in return. Now, the persons who make the greatest outcry on this subject of the importation of corn are persons chiefly engaged in carrying on their operations in factories; for it is the produce of the power-loom which exists in these factories which chiefly has to compete with foreign produce in the markets abroad. According to the returns of 1835, this is the number of the cotton, wool, silk, and flax factories in the United Kingdom, with the number and ages of the persons employed therein, in the year 1835:—

"Cotton factories, 1,262—viz., in England, 1,070; Wales, 5; Scotland, 159; Ireland, 28. In England there are 42 factories empty, all the others are employed. There are 220,134 persons employed in these factories—viz., males 100,495; females, 119,639. Of these, between eight and twelve years, 8,197—viz, males, 4,528; females, 3,669. Between twelve and thirteen years, 20,574—viz., males, 10,663; females, 9,911. Between thirteen and eighteen years, 65,486—viz, males, 27,251; females, 38,235. Above eighteen years, 125,877—viz., males, 58,053; females, 67,824.

"Wool factories, 1,313—viz., in England, 1,102; Wales, 85; Scotland, 90; Ireland, 36. In England there are 9 factories empty; all the others are employed. There are 71,274 persons employed in these factrie—viz., males, 37,477; females, 33,797. Of these, between eight and twelve years, 4,764—viz., males, 2,481; females, 2,283. Between twelve and thirteen years, 8,558—viz., males, 4,290; females, 4,268. Between thirteen and eighteen years, 21,250—viz., males, 10,138; females, 11,112. Above eighteen years 36,702—viz., males, 20,568; females, 16,134.

"Silk factories, 238—viz, in England, 221; Wales, none; Scotland, 6; Ireland, 1. In England there are 25 factories empty; all the others are employed: There are 30,682 persons employed in these factories—viz., males, 10,188; females, 20,494. Of these, between eight and twelve years, 6,411—viz., males, 2,486; females, 3,925. Between twelve and thirteen years, 2,663—viz., males, 952; females, 1,711. Between thirteen and eighteen years, 9,451—viz., males 2,636; females, 6,815. Above eighteen years, 12,457—viz., males, 4,114; females, 8,043.

"Flax factories, 347—viz., in England, 152; Wales, none; Scotland, 170; Ireland, 25. There are 33,283 persons employed in these factories—viz., males, 10,305; females, 22,888. Between eight and twelve years, 1,216—viz., males, 592; females, 624. Between twelve and thirteen years, 4,072—viz, males, 1,782; females, 2,290. Between thirteen and eighteen years, 10,021—viz., males, 3,457; females, 8,654. Above eighteen years, 15,974—viz., males, 4,564; females, 11,410.

"Total of the four manufactures, 3,236 (including 76 empty).—Persons employed, 355,373—viz., males, 158,555; females, 196,818."

So that, if the landowners, as a body, do not amount to more than 30,000, at least they amount to ten times more than those millowners who have a much more distinct interest apart from their workmen than the landlords ever had, or ever could have, from the tenants and labourers and tradesmen around them. As I said before, in opposing this motion, I do not do so in a spirit hostile to the manufacturing classes. The agricultural body of this country never have acted towards their brethren connected with manufactures but in the most considerate and fostering manner. And in now opposing the motion before the House, they are acting not in a spirit of hostility, but from a natural principle of self-defence and self-preservation. It is said, that the agricultural interest has always possessed the political power in this country up to the present period. If so, how has that power been exercised towards the manufacturers? From the earliest period it has nurtured and protected them wherever they required it, up to the present day. We learn the mode in which this protection was secured—secured too, even at the immediate expense of the agricultural body—in that long list of acts which were repealed by Mr. Huskisson in 1825, amounting to upwards of 400. The following are a sample. But before I begin to enumerate them, I may pause for one moment to consider the protection which was in early times afforded to what was our first and greatest manufacture, the woollen. The account of this trade by Mr. Porter was as follows:—

> "There is no doubt that broad cloths were made in England as early as the close of the twelfth, or beginning of the thirteenth century; but the Flemings were at that time far more advanced in the art than our own countrymen, and a considerable part of the cloths, then, and for a long time afterwards, worn in this country were made in Flanders from wool, the produce of English flocks. From a very early period the woollen manufacture has been an object of the especial protection of the English Government. Originally, indeed, the freest exportation of wool was allowed, but in 1660 it was strictly prohibited, and this law remained in force until 1825; the prohibition was grounded upon the belief, that the long staple, or combing wool of England, is superior for some manufacturing purposes, to that of any other country, and that by keeping the raw material at home, we should secure to ourselves the exclusive manufacture of certain fabrics."

The woollen manufacturers of England, alarmed at the rapid progress then being made in Ireland in that branch of industry, induced the House of Parliament to interpose with the king (William 3rd) for its suppression. In his answer to their address, the king made the following promise;—'I shall do all that in me lies to discourage the woollen manufacture in Ireland, and encourage the linen manufacture, and to promote the trade of England.' Nor was this an empty promise. Through the interference of the king with the Irish houses of Parliament an act was passed prohibiting the exportation of woollen goods from Ireland, except to England; an exception which could not operate to the relief of the Irish manufacturer, since prohibitory duties were already laid against their importation into this country. This jealousy of the woollen manufacture extended itself down to the period of the union (1800). The export of English wool had, for a long period, been prohibited to Ireland; and it was proposed in one of the articles of the union, that this prohibition should not be continued, whereupon the woollen manufacturers of England obtained a Committee of the House of Lords on the subject, before which Mr. Law, afterwards Lord Ellenborough, who stated, that the export of English wool to Ireland would be the ruin of the English woollen manufacture; because labour was so much cheaper in Ireland. During the period that this protection was being afforded to our manufactures, England being then an exporter of corn, might, if she had been so disposed, have received for its consumption the cheaper manufactures of the continent, and thus have stifled in their birth the infant manufactures of this country. In the account which I have just given of the protection to the woollen interest, it is not stated, that the English farmer is debarred from sending his wool to be consumed by the foreign manufacturer, not merely by pecuniary penalties and prohibitory laws, but to the extent of the penalty of death. Much has been said of the bounty which the agriculturists gave themselves during the last century, on the exportation of corn, but it must be remembered, that that bounty was given only in exchange for the land-tax, which was necessary for the successful operation of the campaign against Louis the 14th, and that on this exchange of the bounty for the land-tax, the agricultural interest has been the loser of millions. On its exportation of corn, too, restrictions were laid. At first the British farmer was prevented from exporting his corn after the price had risen to 48*s.*, and afterwards, after it rose to 54*s.* And for whose benefit was this restriction on the export of corn? Not for the benefit of the farmer, but for the benefit of the population generally, and especially of the manufacturers, with whose interests the landed body of that day justly conceived their own to be bound up. And has no bounties been given in support of manufactures, even without any direct consideration in return? Let the House look at the list of acts repealed, 6th George the 4th, 1825, relating to trade. They are as follow:—

13th and 14th Car. 2nd.—To restrain the exportation of leather and raw hides out of England.

Ditto—An act prohibittng importing foreign bone lace, cut work, embroidery, fringe, bond-strings, buttons, and needle-work.

Ditto—Against importing foreign wool-cards, wire, or iron-wire.

15th Car.—An act for encouragement of trade.

1st Jas. 2nd—Against importation of gunpowder, arms, and other ammunition, and utensils of war.

Ditto—To encourage building of ships in England.

1st Will. and Mary—For better preventing exportation of wool, and encouraging woollen manufacture, of this kingdom.

4th and 5th Will. and Mary—Prohibiting all foreign hair buttons.

18th Car. 2nd—Against importing fish taken by foreigners.

32nd and 33rd Car. 2nd—Preventing the planting of tobacco in England.

7th and 8th Will. and Mary—An additional duty upon all French goods and merchandise, and prohibiting the export of any frame or engine, or part of the same, for making or knitting worsted and silk stockings, waistcoats, gloves, and other wearing apparel.

7th and 8th Will. and Mary—Another act against exporting wool.

9th and 10th ditto—Ditto.

10th and 11th ditto—Ditto.

11th and 12th ditto—An act for employing the poor by encouraging manufactures.

3rd and 4th Anne—To permit Irish linen to be exported to the plantations, and to prohibit Scotch linen import into Ireland.

6th Anne—200*l*. penalty importing wrought silk, or silks mixed with any other materials, besides forfeiting the silk; and 100*l*. on those in whose custody they might be.

10th Anne—Duties on all soap, paper, chequered, and striped linens imported.

12th Anne—An act to encourage making of sail-cloth in Great Britain; and 45th Geo. 3rd a bounty granted on export of British made sail-cloth or canvas fit for or made into, sails.

1st Geo. 1st—To prevent fresh fish being imported taken by foreigners.

8th Geo. 1st—To encourage silk manufactures, to take off duties on merchandize exported, reducing duties upon beaver-skins, &c., and for importing all furs from British plantations into this kingdom only.

49th Geo. 3rd—Grants allowances to be paid on exportation of the silk manufactures, of this kingdom, or silk mixed with other materials.

9th Geo. 2nd—Against import of fresh fish taken by foreigners. Ditto—Encouragement of sail-cloth; securing duties on foreign ditto; and requiring certain vessels to have a complete suit of British sail-cloth.

18th Geo. 2nd—Relates to bounties on exportation of British or Irish linens.

19th Geo. 2nd—Securing duties on foreign sail-cloth, and compelling one set of British sail-cloth to each new ship in Great Britain.

22nd Geo. 2nd—To prevent importation and wear of foreign embroidery and brocade, gold and silver thread, lace, &c.

23rd Geo. 2nd—To effectually punish persons convicted of seducing artificers in the manufactures of Great Britain and Ireland out of the dominions of the Crown; and to prevent the exportation of utensils made use of in the woollen and silk manufactures. Ditto—To encourage import of pig or bar iron from colonies in America; and to prevent the erection of any mill or other engine for slitting or rolling of iron, or any plating forge to work with a tilt hammer, or any furnace for making steel in any of the said colonies.

26th Geo. 2nd—To encourage silk manufacture, and to prevent import of velvets, &c.

29th Geo 2nd—To grant a bounty on export of certain kinds of British and Irish linen, &c., and taking off of duties on importation of foreign raw linen made of flax. [This shows foreign manufactures at that time.]

5th Geo. 3rd—To supply the export trade to Africa with such coarse printed calicoes and other goods of the manufacture of the East-Indies as are prohibited to be worn or used in Great Britain. Ditto—To prohibit foreign manufactured silk stockings, mitts, and gloves.

6th and 48th Geo. 3rd—To prohibit foreign wrought silks and velvets.

7th Geo. 3rd—To enforce 18th, 21st, and 32nd Geo 2nd for preventing fraudulent importations, and wearing of cambrics and French lawns.

9th Geo. 3rd—Prohibits export of pig and bar iron under certain circumstances.

10th Geo. 3rd—Bounty granted on exportation of British check and striped linens, and upon British and Irish diapers, huckabacks, sheeting, and other linen, of above a certain breadth. Ditto—To prevent fraudulent importations of bast, straw, chip, cane, and horse-hair hats and bonnets.

14th Geo. 3rd—To prevent exportation of utensils made use of in the cotton, linen, woollen and silk manufactures of this kingdom.

21st Geo. 3rd—Repetition of the above act (amended).

22nd Geo. 3rd—To prevent seduction of

workmen abroad, employed in printing calicoes, muslins, and linen, or making blocks, or plates, or other instruments, used in such manufactory, and to prohibit their export.

24th Geo. 3rd—To encourage the hat manufactory, and to prevent the exportation of British hare-skins, British hare-wool, and coney-wool, and to prevent their being dyed or stained.

Acts repealed, in 1825, on trade:—

25th Geo. 3rd—Duties on leather cut in the shape of gloves. Ditto—To prevent importation of foreign made cordage.

25th Geo. 3rd—Prohibits exports of tools used in steel and iron manufactories, and to prevent seduction of workmen, engaged in those trades, abroad.

26th Geo. 3rd — Further encouragement of fisheries in Greenland seas, and Davis' Straits. Ditto—Allows a drawback of the duties on coals used in smelting copper and lead ores, and in fire-engines in the Isle of Anglesey.

28th Geo. 3rd—Preventing export of live sheep, lambs, and rams, wool, yarn, worsted, coverlids, wadding, or beds stuffed with combed wool, or wool fit for combing.

34th Geo. 3rd—Imposing duties on paper, pasteboard, millboard, glazed-paper, &c., Ditto—Prohibits import of cambric and lawn from Ireland, until Ireland prohibits cambric and lawn from being imported from France.

38th Geo. 3rd Further encouragement of southern whale fisheries.

41st Geo. 3rd—To authorise his Majesty from time to time to prohibit the exportation of provisions or food.

45th Geo. 3rd—Perpetuating encouragement of sail-making. Ditto—Additional duties on import of foreign plate-glass.

46th Geo. 3rd — Better encouragement of manufacture of thread-lace in Great Britain.

47th Geo. 3rd—To permit import of German (the same as Prussian) yarn in foreign ships on the same duties as in British.

47th Geo. 3rd—To permit fuller's earth and tobacco-pipe clay to be exported to any possession of his Majesty. Ditto — To allow bounties on British calicoes and cottons exported to Malta, the same as to Gibraltar.

48th Geo. 3rd—Prohibits foreign wrought silks and velvets.

50th Geo. 3rd—To discontinue bounty on export of oil of vitriol; drawback of part of duties paid on import of foreign brimstone, and in making oil of vitriol. Ditto.—To prohibit import of Italian silks, crapes, and tiffanies.

51st Geo. 3rd—Drawback on deals and timber used in mines of tin, copper, and lead, in the counties of Cornwall and Devon. Ditto.—To allow more sheep to be carried from England to the Isle of Man than are now allowed by law.

52nd Geo. 3rd—To allow more worsted yarn to be exported to Canada.

53rd Geo. 3rd—To allow bounty on exports of stuffs, of silks ornamented with embroidery, tambour, needle-work, lace, or fringe, and of ribbons made of silk mixed with inkle and cotton.

54th Geo. 3rd—To allow a bounty on export of British made cordage.

1st and 2nd Geo. 4th—Drawback on coal-duties in draining coal-mines in Pembrokeshire.

3rd Geo. 4th—Continues bounties on British and Irish linen exported.

Act passed 5th July, 1825.

Does the character of these acts, passed, it was said, by agricultural Parliaments, bear any semblance of hostility to the rising and growing manufactures of the country. They are conclusive, in my mind, upon the point, that the landed interest of this country has never intended to separate itself or its interests from those of the body of their country generally, but that, on the contrary, they have encouraged every branch of industry to arise, as the best mode of employing our fast increasing population, and as the securest basis on which to found our national greatness. At the present day, scarcely an article of British manufacture but is protected by a heavy duty, the following among the number:—Baskets, blacking, boots and shoes, bottles, boxes of all sorts, brass manufactures, brocade of gold or silver, buttons, cables, candles, cards, carriages of all sorts, casks, china, clocks, coals, copper manufactures, cordage, cotton manufactures, crayons, crystal, dice, earthenware, embroidery and needlework, flowers (artificial), frames (picture), glass, gloves, gunpowder, hats or bonnets, hoops (iron or wood), japanned ware, ink, iron manufactures, lace, leather, linen manufactures, matting, mattresses, mill-boards, music instruments, paper, pencils, perfumery, pewter manufactures, platting (hats or bonnets), pomatum, ships, silk manufactures, steel manufactures, telescopes, thread, tin, tobacco pipes, toys, turnery, twine, varnish, watches, wax (sealing), whipcord, wine, and woollen manufactures. Now almost the whole of these trades derive their custom from the home trade; they do not, most of them even attempt to compete with foreigners; but foreigners may and do often surreptitiously interfere with them, by means of smuggling, notwithstanding the protection afforded them. And if they depend on the home trade, then it is impossible to deny that they are more immediately in a remunerating price for British corn, than they are in what is called cheap bread, which will ruin their best customers. Take the case of the bootmakers—a pair of boots may be bought of the best make at Brussels or Paris for 20*s.*; boots of the same quality in London are 45*s.*: how would the London bootmaker like a free importation of boots?

Mr. *Hume:* He would like it very well if he had no Corn-laws.

Mr. *Cayley:* Does the hon. Member appear here as the delegate of the bootmakers? Is he sure that he speaks their sentiments?

Mr. *Hume:* No; I speak for myself.

Mr. *Cayley:* I suspect the hon. Member very often pretends to be speaking the sentiments of others, when in fact he is only speaking his own. Then take the case of the glovers; as good gloves can be bought in Paris for 1*s.* 3*d.* as cost here 3*s.* and 3*s.* 6*d.* Would taking off the Corn-laws enable the glover to compete with Parisian glove-makers at this rate? It is preposterous to suppose it. I know this system of protection is not popular with the philosophers and economists of the present day; but it is not the less necessary, or the less to be respected, on that account by those who have at heart the permanent best interests of their country, as it was, indeed, considered by the best economists of other times—for instance, Dr. Adam Smith, who says,

> "Merchants and manufacturers are the people who derive the greatest benefit from the monopoly of the home market. The prohibition of the importation of foreign cattle and salt provisions, together with the high duties upon foreign corn, which, in times of moderate plenty, amount to a prohibition, are not near so advantageous to the graziers and farmers of Great Britain as other regulations of the same kind are to its merchants and manufacturers. Manufactures, those of the finer kinds especially, are more easily transported from one country to another than corn and cattle. In manufactures, a very small advantage will enable foreigners to undersell our own workmen, even in the home markets. The expense of the landlord and farmer is in home-made commodities. The greatest and most important branch of the commerce of every nation is that which is carried on between the inhabitants of the town and those of the country. The interest of the landholder is strictly and inseparably connected with the general interest of society—whatever either promotes or affects the one, necessarily promotes or affects the other."

In a speech a few days ago on this subject, in another place, by a noble and learned Lord, a speech of great length, and coming from him, of course of great ability, a reference was made to some opinions expressed on the question of protection to agriculture, and the views of abstract philosophers thereon, as contained in a letter of my noble Friend, the Secretary of State for the Home Department, to his constituents of Huntingdon in 1822. I have not that letter by me, but I well remember most cordially concurring in every sentiment it contained. They were sentiments, as I believe, the most true, and most worthy of my noble Friend, and I cannot help entertaining a hope, however the noble Lord may now differ as to the mode of protecting the British farmer, that the real essence and substance of those sentiments still remain strong in his mind, and will actuate his conduct as a Minister of the Crown. I feel convinced they will. The only exception which I shall be inclined to take to the letter in question is, that the views which it exhibits do not seem to me perfectly original. I cannot help believing that my noble Friend must have had deeply impressed on his mind a speech delivered in this House two years before; there was so clear an analogy in the spirit, and even in the details between the letter and the speech that it seems to me that my noble Friend must have had that speech so deeply sunken in his mind, that in the course of time he had unwittingly and unconsciously adopted its views as his own. The speech referred to was delivered on the motion of Mr. Holme Sumner, on agricultural distress in May, 1820; and the following is an extract from it:—

> "His hon. friend, the Member for Portarlington, (Mr. Ricardo) had argued as if he had dropped from another planet—as if this were a land of the most perfect liberty of trade—as if there were no taxes, no drawbacks, no bounties, no searchers, or any other branch of trade but agriculture—as if, in this Utopian world of his hon. Friend's creation, the first measure of restriction ever thought on was that on the importation of corn—as if all classes of the community were alike—as if all trades were on an equal footing; and that, in this new state, we were called upon to decide the abstract question, whether or not there should be a protecting price for corn. But we were not in this condition; we were in a state of society in which we had manufactures of almost every description, protected in every way, even to criminal enactments, to prevent the raw material from going out of the country,

in order thereby to assist the native manufacturer. He alluded, as one instance, to the prohibition of the exportation of wool. He never heard from those who spoke so freely against the protection afforded to the agriculturists, the slightest murmur against the restrictive duties on foreign wool. He might mention another instance—the silk trade; he contended that silks might be worn at half or a third less than their present price, if protecting and prohibitory laws had not been enacted in aid of our manufactures in that material; but that was a subject which the hon. Members to whom he alluded took care not to touch upon. Now, he would ask, who was it that paid the poor-rates? Was it principally the manufacturer or the owner and occupier of land? He could easily imagine that he saw, and, in fact, nothing was more common than to see, a manufacturer erect a fine tall, building, a matter of great ornament to the neighbourhood, no doubt, but certainly of great use to him. This building was erected on a comparatively small portion of land, and within its four walls were carried on the manufacture of two very important articles—cotton and paupers. And though this manufactory produced to its proprietor an income frequently of not less than 30,000*l.* a-year, yet he only paid poor-rates as for property of 500*l.*, while his poor neighbour, the farmer, who rented land to that amount, paid the same proportion, though his income was not the fourth part of his rent. Besides this, there were the bridge-rates, the county-rates, the militia-rates, and all the other blessings which were heaped on this favoured class, the agriculturists. They, of course, were not to murmur at all those imposts, nor were they to raise their voices for the same privileges which the other classes enjoyed. But the moment a word was said of any restriction affecting the manufacturers, then the House heard murmurs and complaints from all parties. There then was, as Sir R. Walpole had expressed it, 'great cry and little wool.' That Statesman had compared the agriculturists to a flock of sheep, and said that, like sheep, they were shorn without repining; but the complaints of the commercial and trading classes, when any thing affected them, he had compared to the noise of another animal, which, out of regard to that respectable body, he would not name. It was most impolitic and unjust to support any one class of the community to the neglect of the other. One principle had been objected against the motion, to which, in the abstract, he might subscribe. It was stated to be an erroneous policy to purchase dear corn at home, whilst it could be bought at a much cheaper rate abroad; and it was added, that the effect of this would be, to force men to cultivate bad land at a great expense. Though he might, as he said, agree with this principle in the abstract, yet he had a right to complain of the manner in which it was turned into a meaning, which, as applied to the subject before the House, it could not properly bear; for the question here was, not whether at such an expense you ought to bring poor land into cultivation, but it should be considered that we had already encouraged the cultivation of such land. The circumstances in which the country had been placed were such, that even poor land was eagerly sought and diligently cultivated. It was hedged and ditched, and improved, so as to become the depository of a large portion of British capital. It would be idle to say, that this was done in other times, and under other circumstances; for, if we were to go back at all, we might with as much reason extend our retrospect to the Heptarchy. The fact was, that capital had been so employed, that this land was now under cultivation, that it contained the capital, he might almost say the life, of the cultivators; and it would be as reasonable under such circumstances to refer back to the period he had mentioned, as to say that they should go for their grain to Poland, where the serf cultivated the soil for his lord—because in Poland it could be got cheaper than they could now produce it. He was not wandering into any theory on this subject—he spoke practically. He would mention one fact which had fallen within his own knowledge. Some time ago there were two or three cargoes of corn in the port of London, which but for the Corn-laws, could have been purchased at 37*s.* per quarter (corn of that description could be purchased currently at 40*s.*, this he knew of his own knowledge would have been sold at 37*s.*); now, on the principle on which the present motion was opposed this corn ought to have been purchased, because it was cheaper than any which we could grow; but then, if that principle were extended, what would be the consequence? The inevitable consequence would be, that in the next season 7,000,000 or 8,000,000 of acres would be thrown out of cultivation, and those dependent on them out of employment; the tenants would be expatriated, and the landlords would be brought to the workhouse. Was there any man bold enough to look such a difficulty as that in the face? But then it would be said, 'This might be very good logic for the farmer,—but it would not be so for the consumer.' Let that objection be examined, and after all what did it amount to? That we inflicted a certain calamity on the cultivator and landlord, in order that the consumer might eat his quartern loaf a halfpenny cheaper. He would confine himself to that point, and he maintained it to be as sound a principle as any principle in political economy, that the destruction of one portion of the community could not be considered a benefit, because another portion gained it. This was a proposition which no philosopher or political economist had ever attempted to deny or to dispute. He would suppose a case of a community, consisting of a thousand individuals, and that he invented a law by which 500 of those individuals might be destroyed, which destruction would render the remaining 500 twice as rich as they were before; would any man attempt to say that in such a case, because no part of the wealth left the community, that it had therefore sustained no injury? But, according to the theory of those who opposed this motion, such a law would be most salutary for the 500 who survived. He should, however, run counter to every principle of political economy and public justice, if he did not contend that such a proceeding would be most unjust to the individuals destroyed, and most injurious to the remainder as a community. As to the argument founded on the circumstance that there was bad ground in cultivation, even if the Corn Bill were repealed, much bad ground would still be cultivated, and much good ground left uncultivated; because local circumstances, such as navigable rivers, canals, &c. had great influence over persons in the disposal of their capital. If these theorists, after the repeal of the Bill, would go about the country, they would soon see that their theories were not verified. They would, of course, ask the persons who remained in the occupation of indifferent land their reasons for doing so, and would probably be surprised if an old man should say,—'Though I am acting against your theory, yet you must allow me to remain here.' Nothing short of removal by the parish officers could realize these Utopian doctrines. He was persuaded that the landed interests could not be injured without an injury being sustained by the commercial and manufacturing classes. Who were the consumers of the manufactures? The agriculturists. What was the great cause of the distress of 1816? The cause was, that in the year before the commercial interests had suffered in consequence of the extreme hardships to which the agriculturists were subjected."

Mr. *P. Thomson:* May I ask the name of the individual to whom the hon. Gentleman has alluded.

Mr. *Cayley:* I will inform my right hon. Friend presently. The orator went on to contend that the agriculturists were defrauded of their 80*s.* protection, and that he would vote to consider for an honester way of taking the averages. Has the House guessed—has my right hon. Friend surmised even the author of this speech? Impossible. They are the words of Mr. Brougham. And it is impossible that words can be stronger in favor of protection to the agriculture of this country: they almost render presumptuous an attempt on my part to add any thing further on the subject. Yet they press so strongly on one point—a point seemingly of trivial consideration at the present day in the discussion, but of the first importance in equity—that coming as they do from a lawyer when these abstract economical dogmas were new to Parliament; and when his judgment would be actuated by the fresh and natural impulses of his mind, they tell with a tenfold significance and strength. The property of the owner, Mr. Brougham told us, cannot in justice be sacrificed for an apparent benefit of another class. I, Sir, on my part have always considered it to be one of the positive constitutions of society that property should receive the protection of Government. Doubtless when the nature of the property is such that but few, except the actual possessors, are interested in its welfare, it may be proportionately difficult for a Government to perform its sacred obligations to the possessors who have invested their capital under its abstract or implied sanction: although the justice of the case may remain the same. In this matter, however, of British agriculture, being as it is a means of employment or custom to five-sixths of the population, no such difficulty exists. Now what is the case of the landholder. Land has, from time immemorial, been considered the most solid and permanent mode of investing capital, because it was considered a certain security, one which would always, on the average, bring back as much as was put into it. For this reason, three per cent, for a length of years, was considered, by purchasers of land, sufficient interest for their money: whilst other modes of investment, considered to be less certain and more precarious than land, received from five to thirty per cent. or more, because of the supposed risk which they incurred. In strict justice, therefore, since other and more precarious modes of investment which receive, or have received, (in a higher rate of interest or profit) their compensation for the greater risks that they are supposed to run—the investment in land, which is always paying, in a smaller rate of interest, for the supposed absolute security it enjoys, should be protected by the Legislature. It can never be argued that those who are paid for incurring risk, should alone enjoy security; or that those who pay to enjoy security, should alone be exposed to loss. National justice can never demand this; and therefore I claim protection for the property of the landholder which has been invested under the faith of a continuance of the Corn-laws. But then it is urged that we have little to fear from a repeal of the Corn-laws: that if we will import corn from the corn-growing countries they will take our manufactures in return, that they will give up their protection to their own manufactures, and corn will rise on the continent in consequence of the demand for it here, so that the fall from the usual price in this country will be but trifling. Passing by the philanthropy of the scheme which has for its object the destruction of the rising manufactures of foreign countries, I shall hereafter endeavour to shew how vain is the expectation that foreigners will yield up their manufactures to any legislation of ours. In the first place, the boors of Poland and Russia would not for a lengthened period be consumers to any material extent of our manufactures, but would require gold in exchange for their corn. [*Cheers*]. I know the meaning of that cheer, it means that we must buy the gold with our manufactures. Yes, but if we send an additional quantity of manufactures into the foreign market without having acquired any fresh customers to consume them, we merely depress the general value of our manufactures already there, and so purchase the gold at a great sacrifice to our manufacturing interest. This argument also goes upon the assumption that, if the continental price of corn rose, that circumstance of itself would operate against any great extension of foreign manufactures, especially in neutral markets. But the whole of this mode of argument is based on such hypothetical grounds and depends on so many contingencies wholely out of our control, that I will not risk the great interests at stake on the mere chance of a probable success. On the other hand I contend that we have every reason to believe, that the price of corn must fall very considerably if the duties were taken off its importation. It would be sent from as far north as Archangel, North and Mid Russia, Poland, Prussia, and every district which discharges its produce into the Baltic would cultivate for England. And the freight be it remembered from the ports of the Baltic is little, if any, more than from the west of Ireland. Whilst all that district of south Russia, the extreme south of which abuts upon the Black Sea, and for the produce of which Odessa is the outlet and would be put in requisition for our supply: that immense district of 1000 miles east and west from the Danube to the Don, and 500 miles north and south, containing 50,000,000 of acres fit for immediate cultivation, and chiefly of a rich alluvial soil; at present in a state, for the most part of rough pasture. In the interior it is now grown at 1*s*. to 1*s*. 3*d*. per bushel. It is partly brought down by the rivers Dnieper, Dniester, and Boug; but chiefly in temporary waggons composed almost exclusively of wood, over the rough commons; 100 of these waggons, two oxen to each, are intrusted to one driver; the corn and the oxen are sold at Odessa; the waggons broken up for fire wood, so that the driver has no incumbrances on his return. I learn these facts from an eye witness of them, who, stated to me, (in illustration of the small value of the land and labour there) that he became acquainted there with an Englishman, who went out in 1817 or 18 with a son of Mr. Arthur Young. He had taken a farm near Nicolaef on the Dniester, of 1,000 acres; the rent was 2,000 roubles, or twenty-pence per acre: the price of labour from 2½*d*. to 3*d*. per day; meat one penny per lb. The clothing of the boors was sheepskins in winter, and coarse linen frocks and trowsers in summer. In the Ukraine, at an annual contract market, at Kioff, estates are let, not by the quantity of land, but by the quantity of slaves who labour for the purchaser three days a week, at a rouble (10*d*.) a week, or at from 20 to 50 roubles a year, varying with the quality and situation of the land. Do these facts hold out a pleasant prospect either for the British labourer or owner? Or can any one for a moment doubt but that if there was a probability of a large and steady demand from England corn would be immediately supplied from this immense and fertile district. It is now delivered at Odessa on an average of years at from 20*s*. to 24*s*. per quarter: the freight from Odessa to England averages about 12*s*. 6*d*. a quarter, so that it would reach this country at a price varying from 32*s*. to 40*s*.—say, 36*s*. per quarter. Against these prices, even if rent were altogether abolished, it would be in vain for the British farmer to attempt to contend. And therefore it is that he demands protection. But then it is said, even granting the necessity of protection, the present system of a fluctuating scale is a bad one, and a fixed duty would be better. Why would a fixed duty be better? I have never, although I have been at the pains to hear and think a good deal upon the subject, I heard one valid and substantial reason in its favour. I know, indeed it is assumed that, if the duty were low enough to admit a regular quantity each year, corn would fluctuate less in price, and we should be more sure of a supply in the emergency of an adverse season. To this I answer, if the duty were low enough to admit a considerable quantity of foreign corn, so much agricultural labour and capital would be displaced in this country, and that from the decennial returns presented by the lesser Cortés of 1836, from Rotterdam, an habitual corn importing country, we find the fluctuations greater than in this country. The following is the return from 1826 to 1836:

	Decennial Average.		Lowest Price.		Highest Price.	
Dantzic ..	32 10	..	21 8	..	45 6	All above 100 pr. ct. fluctuation
Hamburgh	30 2	..	20 0	..	41 0	
Rotterdam	37 9	..	25 6	..	52 6	
England ..	56 0	.	39 0	..	66 0	Less than 75 per cent

Instead of the supply being uncertain or limited under the present law, I contend that the prevention of the import of foreign corn when the duty is high (from the price here being low) tends to produce an accumulation of corn in the different ports of the Baltic, and which is produced in the absence of a regular demand, because the labour and the land of those districts can find no employment but in this production. This view is borne out by the facts. 1828-9-30-31 were all wet seasons and years of deficiency in England. The evidence of the agricultural report of 1833 proves this, and also the prices in France for the same period. In 1828 we imported for consumption 842,050 quarters; in 1829, 1,364,230 quarters; 1830 1,701,885; 1831, 1,491,631. Between 1831 and the harvest of 1838, the importation was nominal on account of the price being low. What has been the result of this absence of demand for six years? That we have the most deficient harvest in 1838, we have had since 1816. And now in March have already entered for consumption nearly 2,500,000 quarters of foreign corn, whilst according to the best authorities full 1,500,000 quarters remain to be sent if required. This is our experience on the subject. The object of the present law was, by an ascending scale of duties as the price fell, to protect the grower of corn, and by the decending scale of duties, as the price rose, to protect the consumer. And I affirm, that this has been the effect of the law. During the four scarce crops of 1828-9-30-31, corn did not rise beyond 66*s.*; and during the six succeeding years of a lower price, from larger crops, it protected the farmer by excluding foreign corn. Now, the farmers, who, as a body are unanimous in favour of the existing law, know very well, that no fixed duty they could obtain from Parliament, would protect them under a low price; and they are equally confident that no fixed duty, which would be the least protection, could be sustained under a scarcity price by any government, and therefore they prefer a law which is self regulating, and is prepared for either contingency of a low or high price: while by the gradual fall of the duty (under the six weeks averages) as the price rises; and by the gradual rise of the duty as the price falls, sudden changes are prevented, and an equability of price, as far as is consistent with the fluctuations of the seasons and natural causes, is preserved. Does fluctuation in price, however, occur in no other commodities than corn, and under no other system of duties? I have a return of the fluctuations which have taken place in various articles of commerce between the years 1820 and 1837. The general results are as follow: the fluctuation in wheat during the periods mentioned was 113 per cent., cinnamon, 62 per cent., cochineal, 252 per cent., coffee, 90 per cent., cotton, 90 per cent., sheeps' wool, 300 per cent., currants, 209 per cent., flax, 58 per cent., indigo, 185 per cent., Jamaica sugar, 55 per cent., Russia tallow, 68 per cent., Congou tea, 38 per cent., tobacco, 200 per cent., logwood, 54 per cent., and mahogany, 100 per cent. It has been argued, that by drawing our supplies from a large number of countries, the bad harvest of one district would be compensated for by the good ones in others. In this argument it is assumed, that there is a much greater diversity of climate and circumstances in the corn-growing countries of Europe than really exists. In Mr. Low's book on agriculture, there are some statements which put this matter in quite a different light. According to them it appears, that the corn-growing countries of Europe lie between forty-five and fifty-five degrees of latitude, and were subject in a great degree to similar winds, rains, droughts, and frosts. There are some remarkable instances of this. In 1794 the spring was prematurely warm on the continent as well as in England. The summer of 1798 was dry, and that of 1799 wet in both places. Again, in 1811, the harvest was deficient throughout the north-west of Europe generally, and from the same cause—blight; while that of 1816 was still more generally deficient from rain and want of warmth. From a coincidence of prices in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, it is also highly probable, that similar seasons prevailed here and on the continent, especially in 1708, 1709, and in several seasons between 1764 and 1773. When, therefore, it is proposed to leave England dependent on foreign supplies, it should be recollected, that the same causes which occasioned a bad harvest in England would be very likely to produce them in other corn countries. Why, therefore, should we not expect, that the same thing should take place that has recently happened in Naples and in France, where the exportation of corn was prohibited at the precise juncture at which it was wanted in England? The advocates of repeal have talked of its being unnatural to prevent the importation of food into this country. How much more unnatural is it to take it away from other countries in a time of famine, leaving the wives and children of those whose toil has produced it to starve in the midst of plenty? It is not to be wondered at, that foreign Governments should in such circumstances prohibit the exportation of corn. England herself, in such a case, had always prohibited the exportation of corn; and did so not for the advantage of the agricultural interest, but for the protection of the public generally. The law prevented exportation after the price reached *53s. 4d.* at one period of the last century; and after the price reached *48s.* at an earlier period. There is another point which has been well treated in a pamphlet published by Mr. Gladstone. That gentleman says well and truly, that if you attempt to run the foreign manufacturer so hard, by raising the price of food upon him and lowering it in England, you will be met by counteractive measures from foreign governments. Whenever a great deficiency of corn arises, the Emperor of Russia, as the King of Prussia had once done before, and other potentates, will prevent the exportation of corn. They will put a tax on the exportation of corn, or prohibit it altogether, for the purpose of making food cheap to their own manufacturers, while it was dear to the manufacturers of England. It would be well for us to bear in mind the bounties paid on the import of wheat in 1796 and 1800. In the former year 573,418*l.*, in the latter, 2,135,678*l.* This experience and these causes renders it a matter of the soundest wisdom and prudence for the community at large to place their main reliance on a home supply of food. It will even be the cheapest policy in the long run. The interest and necessities of the grower, however, must be considered in the mean time. The last argument I will offer on this particular point, is one affecting most nearly the condition of the manufacturing operative. If we require a very large importation of foreign corn under a deficient crop, we either shall be able to get it or we shall not. If we are not, he must be content to go without it; if we can get it, gold almost invariably is the article of export in exchange for corn; and when we are famishing for want of food, the foreigners know we must give them what they ask. Now, the operation of gold leaving the country on the condition of the operative is this, the Bank of England from whence the bullion is obtained, draws in its issues of paper in proportion; merchant accommodation is immediately limited, the manufacturer is crippled in his means, prices fall, and the master is compelled to lower wages precisely at the moment when, under a famine price, the operative requires as much wages as he can procure. The less we depend on foreign countries for corn, and the more we rely on our own production of it, the less can such a contingency as this arise to affect the condition of the working class. In a general European scarcity of corn, each foreign country will be compelled to supply its own subjects first.

In entering on another branch of the subject—viz., the manufacturing, I beg to thank the House for its patient attention, and to crave its indulgence for a short time longer. What is the complaint made by the delegates from the manufacturers at the present moment? that Russia, Prussia, Switzerland, the United States, Belgium, and France, are manufacturing for themselves, and competing with us in neutral markets. I find it stated in a speech of Mr. Smith, the Chairman of the Manchester Chamber of Commerce:—

> "That in 1820 we exported to Russia 13,203,857, yards of cotton cloth; in 1837 our exports to that country were reduced to 847,022 yards only. In 1820, we exported to Prussia 5,442,535 yards of cloth, now we exported not a yard! To Germany in 1820 we exported 47,658,285 yards, in 1837 our exports to that country had fallen off to 38,581,533 yards. In fact the consequence of our policy has been to reduce our exports to Europe less by twenty per cent. than their amount during the five years after the establishment of peace. Our exports to northern Europe were less by 7,400,000*l.* since 1832 than they were the first five years after the war."

This falling-off is attributed to the British Corn-laws; but I deny, that the British Corn-laws has had anything to do with this encouragement of foreign manufactures. The French revolutionary war made almost every nation in Europe to rest more or less on its internal resources. The "Prussian league" originated, not in the Corn-laws of England, but from the Berlin and Milan decrees. Although the revolution destroyed every branch of manufactures in France, yet, in 1814-15, we find a complete revival of every species of industry—in many instances, under the superintendence of British artisans. Spain and Portugal were large recipients of our manufactures, so long as they possessed South America, Brazils, &c.; but since the independence of their colonies, our trade has materially fallen off to Cadiz and Lisbon, and an exclusive system been adopted, for the purpose of fostering their own manufactures. Italy scarcely grows corn sufficient for its own wants, and any diminution of our trade in that quarter cannot be owing to our refusal of their grain. In Germany manufactures increased rapidly, owing to the British continental blockade during the war with France. Belgium rose rapidly in manufactures at the same period, and found a vast market for them in France, with which the Low Countries were then united. During the war, dye stuffs were smuggled from England to the continent in large quantities, for the use of the manufacturers then in full operation. The muslin trade was found to be in great activity in France at the peace in 1815. Napoleon taught the nations of Europe the great lesson of manufacturing for themselves; and England lost the almost exclusive supply of the South American and Brazilian markets, on the independence of those countries; but, all this had no relation whatever to the Corn-laws in England.

But what has given great facility to foreign manufactures (in conjunction with their fixed resolution to establish them) is, the short-sighted policy of which our manufacturers, and latterly our Government, has been guilty in furnishing other countries with the raw materials, or with materials which had undergone only the first process of the manufacture. I allude to the export of long wool and yarns of every description. The export of cotton yarn is of no new date: it had commenced before the end of the war. It so happened that a near relative of my own, about thirty years ago, lived a good deal in the neighbourhood of Manchester, and seeing the great avidity with which some parties were pursuing the export of yarn, he remonstrated with them on its impolicy, saying, that it was evident it would enable the foreigner to get between the spinners of this country and the general market for woven goods. The reply was, "It is the most profitable department of the trade. It will last our time." To show the early period at which Russia was aiming to establish the cotton manufacture I may refer to the fact, that in 1812, when Napoleon was marching into Russia, Mr. Barton (until lately the largest exporter of yarn from this country) had yarn in Moscow and Petersburgh which took 700 waggons in the former place and 1500 in the latter to retreat with into the interior. I have here a table containing the exports of cotton yarn from Great Britain, from 1818 to 1834 inclusive, distinguishing the countries to which it was sent. It affords a perfect barometer to the progress which has been made in manufacturing by other countries. How could our manufacturers expect that foreigners would not compete with them when they presented them with the ready means so to do. Unless they had destroyed the yarn as soon as they bought it of us, they must have been expected to weave it. We could not both sell the yarn and weave it too. The truth, however, I believe to be, that such was the overweening confidence of our manufacturers in their own powers that they never dreamt of their monopoly of the cotton trade being invaded. They now speak indeed of the absurdity of supposing other nations not to have heads and hands like our own; but I remember well eight or ten years ago their laughing to scorn any idea of the kind. And when other branches of trade and commerce have been distressed during the last twenty years the spinners have given it a denial, and turned with an air of triumph to the increase in our exports, forgetting that yarn was a great ingredient in those exports, and that they were thus yearly parting with the sources of their own superiority. The manufacturers have been much more the victims of their own cupidity, than of any selfishness on the part of the landed interest. In 1820, when general distress prevailed, Mr. Huskisson pointed with satisfaction to the increase of our exports. In 1830 he did the same. In 1833 Mr. Poulett Thomson, the mouth-piece of the spinners, followed his example, and preferred to believe columns of figures before the affirmations of honest men.

EXPORTS OF COTTON YARN FROM GREAT BRITAIN FROM 1818 TILL 1834 INCLUSIVE.

Years.	Russia and Ports in the Baltic.	Germany, Belgium and Holland.	France, Spain, Portugal, and Northern Ports in the Mediterranean.	Africa and N. and S. America.	India and China.	Totals.
	lbs.	lbs.	lbs.	lbs.	lbs.	lbs.
1818	5,913,691	7,937,234	876,957	13,932	1,861	14,743,675
1819	3,779,544	13,124,637	1,157,593	22,665	971	18,085,410
1820	9,060,052	11,859,802	2,089,451	22,009	1,011	23,032,325
1821	4,815,114	14,819,820	1,863,340	21,674	6,421	21,526,369
1822	4,948,619	18,764,070	2,838,828	20,673	23,278	26,595,468
1823	7,148,497	16,694,715	3,383,204	29,035	123,535	27,378,986
1824	12,304,373	16,497,594	4,652,063	45,616	105,864	33,605,510
1825	9,369,333	19,721 419	3,264,078	51,408	235,366	32,641,604
1826	12,380,188	22,160,331	6,671,463	47,732	919,807	42,179,521
1827	11,481,650	23,225,400	5,675,140	170,797	2,793,645	43,346,632
1828	14,838,515	18,169,935	5,826,280	222,872	4,185,280	43,242,882
1829	17,564,062	31,262,142	8,203,386	636,274	2,896,325	60,562,189
1830	17,855,541	29,718,184	11,485,195	327,483	4,291,713	63,678,116
1831	14,352,638	28,023,322	10,792,384	1,689,155	6,703,655	61,561,154
1832	20,516,822	39,479,666	7,805,977	1,442,534	5,317,193	74,563,192
1833	19,446,895	34,853,842	6,160,239	1,402,311	4,615,733	66,479,020
1834	18,033,642	39,248,959	17,179,634	1,392,892	5,480,432	81,335,559
1837						100,000,000
1838						115,000,000

Let this table of the export of cotton yarn be well considered, and it must prove to any impartial mind how little the Corn-laws have been concerned in promoting foreign manufactures. Suppose for the sake of argument, that Russia and the countries surrounding the Baltic have been driven into manufactures by our corn-restricting system, (which I have before shown has not been the case) how have our Corn-laws affected Belgium and Holland, and the interior of Germany, represented by the second column of the table? And yet their importation of cotton yarn between 1820 and 1834 increased 100 per cent. more than that of the Corn growing countries; and this too, be it remarked, before the institution of the Prussian league. Then take France, Spain and Portugal as represented by the third column of the table, and we shall see, that their import of yarn increased in a greater ratio than in the Corn-growing countries, of the first column. In the name of common sense, what has Switzerland to do with sending us corn? And yet in some respects Switzerland has become a formidable rival. Or what has

India or China to do with our Corn-laws? and yet they have been increasing their imports of yarn. Or what has South America or the United States? We surely take plenty of their agricultural produce in the shape of cotton, for them not to grumble at our refusing their corn; even if they had it to send, which I much doubt. They have latterly had a scarcity of it themselves. The United States, at the Harrisburgh Convention in 1827-8 certainly complained of a disposition on the part of "liberal England" to smother their rising manufactures. So that all this charge against the Corn-laws, that they have fostered foreign competition, to the detriment of our own manufactures, turns out to be an utter fallacy and a groundless assumption. Has France fared better in her silk trade than we in our cotton? The silk manufacture is extending itself all over the continent. In Sicily, Switzerland, Sweden, Prussia, and Russia, it has spread rapidly. The large silk manufactories of Moscow, Novogorod and Petersburgh, supply goods for the Leipsic and other German fairs; and in tapestry rival the celebrated Gobelins. Have these countries complained of French Corn-laws? and do the delegates pretend, that French Corn-laws have led to the rise of other silk manufactures than those of France? We, have already tried the plan of coaxing other countries to give up their manufactures. We lowered our duties on French silks, and gloves, and wines, for the avowed purpose, and with the declared expectation of the Ministers of the Crown, that France would lower her duties, in return, on our manufactures. The wine growers and silk manufacturers had declared, that the reason of their high duties on our manufactures was the high duties we levied on their produce. We lowered our duties. Have they lowered theirs? Not one. The same high protective duties remain on our cottons, linens, and hardwares; and they have even raised the duty on cotton yarn within the last year or two. Are not these facts sufficiently significant of the determination of foreign countries to persevere in their system of protecting their own manufactures. What they wanted at an earlier period was capital; the raw material was expensive, and so was the machinery, necessary to manufacture it, especially yarn; twenty-five years of peace have gradually enabled them to accumulate capital; we have supplied them with yarn; and the raw material has fallen in price as follows; which, of course, enables smaller capitals to deal with the article.

PRICES OF COTTON YARN, 100 HANKS TO THE ℔; IN THE FOLLOWING YEARS.

	s.	d.	
1786	38	0	per ℔.
1790	30	0	do.
1796	19	0	do.
1800	9	5	do.
1806	7	2	do.
After many fluctuations in			
1832	2	11	do.

Prussia in particular, is said to have been actuated in its scheme of the German league by our Corn-laws. But what said the Berlin correspondent of the Morning Chronicle (a journal hostile to the views I take on this subject) in a letter dated January 30th 1839.

> "The English Corn-law question is very much agitated here with respect to its influence on agriculture and manufactures in Russia. One party maintains, that the abolition of your Corn-laws will be a deathblow to the latter, while the benefit resulting from an increase of the former, will be far from counterbalancing that blow. They wish the continuance of those laws, because the contiguity of Germany and Prussia to England, enables them to profit by an emergency like that existing at this moment, more than remoter countries, whose imports arrive when the emergency is past. If we believe this party, that profit of German exporters in one year like the present is tantamount to what they would gain in half a century, the English Corn-laws being abolished. The truth of the matter seems to be, that we must look for internal measures, and not for what foreign legislators will do or not, to see the situation of our agriculturists and manufacturers improved."

With respect to the encouragement given by foreign powers to their own manufactures, and to shew even the personal interest taken in them by the reigning Princes, I may quote a statement of Mr. Cobden of Manchester, a calico printer, at a meeting of the chamber of commerce of that town, from his own observation in a recent tour in Germany:—

> "Whilst at Dresden, I was shewn over a large machine-making establishment by an Englishman, who took me into a large room filled with machinery for spinning flax, with Gore and Wesley's patent improvements; this said he, was brought out from England, at an expense of 35,000 dollars for models; and I am engaged to superintend the copying of it,

At Chemnitz, also, in Saxony, I visited a large establishment, organized and conducted by English mechanics for the manufacture of machinery. And it happened, that on the very day I was there, the place was decorated with evergreens and laurel branches, for the purpose of doing honour to the King and Queen of Saxony, who paid a visit to the premises. I found at Prague, in Bohemia, an establishment, belonging to an Englishman, for making machinery for manufactures; and at Vienna there were two of our countrymen accommodated under an imperial roof, carrying on a similar trade. At Elberfeld and Aix-la-Chapelle, I also found large machine-making businesses carried on by Englishmen. At Liege there is a similar concern, the largest in the world, belonging to Mr. Cockerill, who was born at Haslingden, in Lancashire, and who employs nearly 4,000 hands. And at Zurich I found the large establishment of Mr. Escher, with an Englishman at the head of the foundry, and another at the head of the forge, casting five tons of iron a-day, brought from England, into spindles, rollers, and wheels, for the spinners and manufacturers of Austria, Saxony, or Bavaria. In almost every large town there were English mechanics instructing the natives to rival us."

Mr. Cockerill of Liege, here alluded to, lately suspended payment, and to shew the interest of the Government in undertakings of this nature, it advanced money for his relief, and took up his liabilities, when the banks refused. The King of Belgium, I know as a fact, likewise, not long since, offered to, I believe, the largest silk manufacturer in England, a patent for twenty years, of the district of Bruges, and ten miles round it, if he would go and establish himself there. Our mechanics and artizans, are tempted abroad by the great encouragement given to them, by foreign powers; they are received as teachers there; and are not driven from this country by the Corn-laws. Not long since an Englishman, of the name of Wilson, received the honorary rank of Major-general, from the Emperor, for superintending a cotton-factory at Moscow. All these facts demonstrate the eager interest taken in manufactures abroad, and that they are not to be cajoled out of them. Mr. Rawson's statements to the delegates at Manchester, have been much discussed. The *Morning Chronicle* thought them of such importance, that it published the most material of them, in an apparently authenticated form. That journal says:—

"The most important facts stated by Mr. Rawson, a Nottingham hosier, at the second meeting of the chamber of commerce at Manchester, did not find their way into the reports published in this, or any other paper. He said, that from 1814 to 1824 his house supplied Saxony with hosiery when they were totally driven out by Saxon hosiery; that from 1824 to 1834, they maintained a competition with the Saxons in the United States of America, when they finally retired from the struggle; that from 1834, to this time, they had been importing an annually increasing quantity of Saxon hosiery for the supply of their English customers; and the following morning he was about to give a large order to a commercial traveller from Saxony, on which goods he should pay five per cent. expences, and twenty per cent. duty, and have a handsome profit remaining; for he bought at 2*s.* 6*d.* what he could not procure at Nottingham for less than 5*s.*

So that, even if the labour in stockings, amounted to one-half of the cost, and the whole of the labour could be saved, according to this account, we should then only be on a par with the Saxons. How would a repeal of the Corn-laws remedy a case like this, when the article is shewn to be cheaper in Saxony, by the whole value of the labour? Mr. Rawson, himself, is obliged to see it in this light; he goes on to say:—

"He did not think, that even the repeal of the Corn-laws, would enable them to maintain a competition; but for any others to think, that anything short of a total repeal would do them any good, was merely delusion."

What then? We are to repeal the Corn-laws, not with any reasonable prospect of advantage to the manufacturer, but by way of experiment, and with a certain prospect of committing the heaviest injury on the landed interest. Is Mr. Rawson, however, correct in his statement? I have been at the pains to enquire, and, in particular, wrote to a gentleman. Nottingham, retired from business, and well acquainted with the trade of the town (I may add, that he is a strong liberal in politics) in reference to the account given by Mr. Rawson. This is his answer:—

"Nottingham, Feb. 28, 1839.

"Mr. Rawson's statements cannot be substantiated. I have this morning seen a very considerable manufacturer of cotton hosiery, who has recently been in Saxony, and he informs me, that Saxon machinery and Saxon mechanics are not worth a moment's consideration. Some of their stockings he showed me, and they are a very inferior article indeed, although they are the best made by the Saxons; therefore it can be only in the most shabby and spurious articles of our trade where they can, in any manner, compete with us. The

Americans have been trying their goods, but have this year sent their orders here; indeed, the orders for the finer kinds of hosiery are this year both larger and more abundant than they have been for several years. I send you a printed reply to a part of Rawson's assertion, written by a person who is well acquainted with the cotton branch of our trade, and I believe his statements are generally correct, as I have conversed with some of the workmen he names, and their report is very similar to his statement. The price of making a dozen of stockings of the description you mention, such as those the hosiers can sell in their warehouse for 24*s.* money :—

	£.	*s.*	*d.*
Workmen	0	14	0
Cotton, 2lbs., at 2*s.* 7½*d.*	0	5	3
Bleaching	0	1	2
Warehouse expenses	0	1	7
Time, profits, &c.	*0	2	0
	£1	4	0

	s.	*d.*	£. *s.* *d.*
Workmen's wages, 72 hours in the week, 12 pair of hose, at 1*s.* 2*d.*			0 14 0
Deduct—	*s.*	*d.*	
Frame-rent	1	0	0 3 0
Seaming	1	0	
Fire, candle, &c.	0	6	
Needles	0	6	
Nett wages			£0 11 0

The above work is considered to be nearly the best in the plain cotton branch, and the men employed therein earn more than those in the coarser frames. The above calculation is made on those stockings made from a six-and-thirty guage frame, and of two-threads cotton No. 40. A man in a thirty-guage frame working coarser cotton will not clear above 7*s.* 6*d.* or 8*s.*, working seventy-two hours in the week, and the hosiers assure me, that the men employed in the cotton-hose trade do not average 7*s.* a-week, only the wife or daughter, or other children, may do the seaming for the frame, which brings in a trifle more. The most declining part of the Nottingham and Leicester hosiery trade is that above alluded to, where the German articles have slipped in. Leicester has felt this more than Nottingham, inasmuch as they manufacture a coarser and worse article than is made here. We meet the Germans at the Frankfort and Leipsic fairs, and we find them creeping into America, but only in the article I have described. The United States take more of our cotton hosiery than any other nation, and is of more importance than our home trade. You will perceive, that I have confined myself to the two-needle or cotton branch of our trade, as it is that only in which the Saxons can possibly affect us, and it is that only which Mr. Rawson can know anything of, he being in no other. As to Mr. Villiers's speech, I see very little new it; nor does he show to the House, how the poor man is to be benefitted by a change, for, if he could pull down the price of corn, would not the master pull down the price of labour, so that the operative would not have any advantage from the reduction?"

Things, therefore, are not quite so bad as Mr. Rawson represents. Indeed, on the occasion of the first discussion we had on this question, it was quite plain, that the hon. Member for Wolverhampton had discovered, that the delegates had proved too much, for he more than once deprecated the notion, that we had been driven out of neutral markets; it had not quite come to that; but his language was merely anticipatory of such an event. And yet in the same speech on the 19th of February, I take the following extract:—

"Independent of the duty laid on English cloths in Germany, Prussian cloths are sold much cheaper than English. English fine woollens are already excluded from Germany, and from several neutral markets; and as soon as the Prussians can sufficiently extend their manufacture—which they are doing with astonishing rapidity—they will beat the English in all neutral markets, and probably in the home market of England itself, notwithstanding the import duty on foreign woollens in this country."

If this be so, how, I again ask, can a repeal of the Corn-laws remedy the evil? The landed interest must be ruined while the manufacturer will not be benefitted. But, in fact, have the manufacturers of this country any fair ground of complaint at the progress of manufactures abroad, or of the extent of their own exports. In addition to the amazing increase in the export of cotton yarn, they, or the Government, have facilitated the efforts of their rivals by the export of wool, coal, linen and worsted yarn, and machinery; this last, perhaps, it was useless to prevent, since it can be made from drawings. The increase in the export of wool has been from 35,242lbs. in 1820, to 4,642,604lbs. in 1835: in worsted yarn, from 3,924lbs. in 1820, to 2,357,336lbs. in 1835: in linen yarn from 136,312*l.*'s worth in 1834, to 655,699*l.* in 1838. And what has been the increase of the export trade since the peace? The whole export trade of the United Kingdom was:—

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* This 2*s.* has to cover interest on the material from the time of purchase to that of sale, waste of material by the workmen, &c.

EXPORTS.

	Official value.	Declared do.
1816 - -	34,774,521	40,328,940
1820 - -	37,820,293	35,569,077
1825 - -	47,166,020	38,877,388
1831 - -	60,683,933	37,163,649
1836 - -	84,883,276	53,615,430

Then take the export of cotton alone:—

COTTON GOODS EXPORTED.

	Yards.	Value.	Twist—lb.	Value.
1820 -	248,370,630	£13,153,529	23,032,325	£2,826,639
1828 -	363,328,431	12,483,249	50,505,751	3,595,405
1836 -	637,667,627	17,183,167	88,191,046	6,120,366

In 1837 the export of cotton twist rose to upwards of 100,000,000lbs., and last year it has been 115,000,000lbs. Perhaps the increase in the consumption of cotton wool since the peace is one of the most striking facts in the history of our manufactures.

QUANTITY OF COTTON WOOL ENTERED FOR CONSUMPTION.

1838, 378,019,654lbs.; 1839, 460,756,023; an increase in one year nearly double the consumption of any year in the war; in 1801, 54,203,433; in 1814, 53,777,802lbs.

This last return served also to show that the consumption of cotton wool had remained stationary during the war; a circumstance totally lost sight of by the hon. Member for Wolverhampton and the right hon. President of the Board of Trade, when they vaunted of the rapidly increasing manufactures of the country having been the most powerful instrument in our hands for carrying through the last expensive war. No doubt, by the increase of prices during the war, and in consequence of the manufacture being, where it was carried on by means of the steam engine, in fewer hands, and often only in the hands of patentees, great individual fortunes were made; but the great progress has been made since the war, when the country has evidently been in a less fit condition for carrying on a war than it was then. Could the export manufacturers of the country bear the expense of the last war now; even when their operations were threefold what they were during the war? According to their own account they would be able to carry on a war three times as expensive. It is plain, then, it was the internal resources of the country stimulated as they were by the depreciated money of the war, and the vigour by that means infused into the landed interest and the home trade which carried us so triumphantly through the war. I obtain the following returns to illustrate this view, from Mr. Porter, of the Board of Trade (a gentleman hostile to the views I entertain) except in the instance of the return of broad and narrow cloths which are from M. Cesar Moreau's statistics of British woollens. In some of the articles, silk and linens, Mr. Porter gives no account earlier than 1820, and I only adduce them to show that neither of them could have materially assisted the prosecution of the war. I have stated that the consumption of cotton was 54,203,433lbs. in 1800; and in 1814, 53,777,802lbs. It did not materially vary in any of the intervening years except one. I now refer to the following returns, to show what had been the increase of trade in different branches during the war, and since that period.

EXPORTS OF BRASS AND COPPER MANUFACTURES.

	cwts.		cwts.
1805 (the earliest year of which we have any record) .	85,054	1811 .	64,210
		1814 .	73,248
1808 .	79,210	1833 .	192,974
		1834 .	205,960

PRODUCE OF THE CORNISH TIN MINES.

	Tons.		Tons.
1750 to 1754 .	2,585	1800 to 1804 .	2,676
1780 to 1784 .	2,667	1810 to 1814 .	2,339
1790 to 1794 .	3,405	1830 to 1834 .	4,047

SILK EXPORTS.

1820 .	£371,755	1834 .	£636,419
1826 .	168,801	1835 .	972,031
1829 .	267,931		

BRITISH LINEN EXPORTS.

	Yards.		Yards.
1820 .	24,066,914	1833 .	51,393,420

HARDWARE AND CUTLERY EXPORTED.

	Tons.		Tons.
1805 .	4,288	1814 .	6,162
1808 .	2,673	1833 .	16,497
1812 .	5,854	1834 .	16,275

EXPORT OF BRITISH IRON IN AN UNMANUFACTURED STATE.

	Tons.		Tons.
1801 .	3,001	1812 .	13,196
1802 .	5,450	1814 .	15,468
1806 .	4,194	1833 .	75,333
1808 .	9,096	1834 .	70,809

The value of woollen goods exported from England in 1700 was about 3,000,000*l.*; in 1738, 4,158,643*l.*; but in 1776 had fallen to 3,068,053*l.*; in 1800 they had risen in value to about double what they were a century before; but as the price of wool was double, it is probable the quantity had not increased.

Account of the Number of Yards of Broad and Narrow Cloths milled at the several Fulling-mills in the West Riding of Yorkshire.

	Broad Cloths. Yards.	Narrow Cloths. Yards.
1800	9,263,966	6,014,420
1804	9,987 255	5,440,179
1808	9,050,970	5,309,007
1812	9,949,419	5,117,209
1814	10,656,491	6,045,472

It is clear from the foregoing returns, that the great extension to our export trade did not take place during the war; for these are the chief articles of export; and it is equally manifest that to our export trade we were not indebted for our power to carry on that war. But is it equally manifest—acknowledging as I do the immense individual fortunes that have been made under our manufacturing system—that the population have been happier or in a state of greater comfort, since the late great extension of our export trade? Take the poor-rates as a sample—

Poor Rates	1749—	£ 689,971
	1832	8,612,920

Population { 6,500,000 / 14,000,000 } England and Wales.

Population double—Poor-rates ten fold.

This manufacturing system, therefore, however great an advantage to a country, in its due proportions, cannot be considered without certain drawbacks of difficulties and incumbrances with which it is attended; it is consequently prudent, in a country, not to rest its security for wealth or happiness on that basis alone. I am ashamed to have trespassed so long on the kind indulgence of the House. I will only touch, and that very shortly, on one topic more, and that is in reference to the man who has to earn his daily bread.

There is great delusion in the argument for a repeal of the Corn-laws as it affects the working class. Cheap bread is the best for the labourer, and so it is at once concluded that, an inundation of foreign cheap corn must benefit it. But cheapness is only a relative term, relative, that is to the means of purchasing. Has the Prussian labourer, living in the midst of cheap corn, the means of purchasing more than the English? Hear what Mr. Jacob says. By Mr. Jacob's Report on the Corn trade, written ten or twelve years ago, it appears that the average price of the quarter of wheat for five years ending with 1824, was 27*s.* in Prussia. The average price of Britain was 55*s.* for the same period. The wages of Prussia are stated to be 2*s.* 6*d.* per week, and of Britain 10*s.* per week. The real wages, therefore, the quantity of wheat the labourers could purchase, was double in Britain what it was in Prussia. It is not an unusual *ad captandum* mode of putting this question, in order to excite the prejudices of the working class against the Corn-laws, to paint a small loaf in juxta position with a larger one; as if the cheaper corn countries had a larger loaf, a delusion which is laid bare by the account Mr. Jacob gives; and also as if, when cheap foreign corn came here, they would necessarily have the means of purchasing the larger loaf. But do the parties who adopt this mode of dealing with the question (an unfair one, as I must think) ever propose to put the larger wages into the scale along with the smaller loaf, snd then weigh it against the larger loaf with the smaller wages; or do they ever exhibit the black bread of Russia in juxta position with the white bread of England? The truth is, and it cannot be concealed, the labourers of the corn districts of Europe are very little advanced in civilized habits. They are content to work for the coarsest food, and if we compel our labourers to compete with them, they must exchange their white bread for the black bread of Russia, and be driven a century or two backwards in civilization. If the foreign labourer lived as the English labourer has been accustomed to do, they would not be able to sell their labour much cheaper. Mr. Alexander Galloway, before the committee on artizans and machinery, in 1824, stated, "Wages are higher in London than Paris; but I have heard from Englishmen who work at Paris that the difference is not so great in the expenses of living, if they indulged in English habits." The same testimony is borne, in the letter referred to by my Nottingham correspondent, by five English working stockingers lately returned from Germany: they declare that house-rent and firing are extremely dear in Germany, and that, taking every kind of provisions as to quantity and quality, they are not ten per cent. cheaper than in Nottingham. The letter goes on to state, "A letter from a bobbin-net lace-maker at Chemnitz has been shown to us, in which the writer, whom we believe is in the employ of Mr. Rawson's Saxon gentleman, complains of his being deceived by the persons who seduced him to leave his country, about the price of provisions at Chemnitz, as he avers that it does not make a shilling a-week difference to him in his living." So that it is plainly the habits of the English workman which are the great difficulty in the way of our manufacturers in this foreign competition; and God forbid that these advanced habits of life should be altered for the worse. In consequence of the difference in the habits of this and other countries, their wages are proportionally different. Mr. Greg of Manchester is reported to have compared them as follows:—

Operatives are paid in

France ..	*5s.* 8*d*	per wk. of	72	hrs.
Switzerland ..	*4s.* 5*d.*	„	82	„
Austria ..	*4s.* 0*d.*	„	76	„
Tyrol ..	*3s.* 9*d.*	„	88	„
Saxony ..	*3s.* 6*d.*	„	72	„
Bona, on the Rhine	*2s.* 6*d.*	„	84	„

The average wages being a fraction under 4*s.* per week; the average wages paid to hands similarly employed in England, but for fewer hours, being 12*s.* a-week.

The object of the repeal of the Corn-laws, is to reduce English and Continental wages to a level, and it is almost inferred in the argument, that the Corn-laws produce the difference. Now what is the fact? I have entered into this estimate very minutely as to the effect produced on wages by the Corn-laws, and the following is the result; the degree being so minute, the estimate is obliged to be made in farthings. I have assumed, what the delegates have frequently assumed, that the Corn-laws add 15*s.* to the price of the quarter of wheat. 1*s.* is equal to 48 farthings, if it were equal to 50 farthings, one farthing in the shilling would be 2*l.* per cent.; half ditto, 1 ditto; $\frac{1}{4}$ farthing 10*s.* ditto. Suppose a man's wages to be 50*l.* per annum: 15*s.* addition on the quarter of wheat would be 30*s.* in the 100*l.*, or $1\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. Now, $\frac{3}{4}$ of a farthing is $1\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. of a shilling. This tax, then, on an operative's wages would be $\frac{3}{4}$ of a farthing in a shilling; or 2 farthings and $\frac{1}{4}$ in 3*s.*, supposing that to be his wages per diem. But, as the average of wages, in the manufacturing districts, of men, women, and children, will be nearer 10*s.* per week, the taxation would be proportionally higher; or 1*d.* and $\frac{1}{2}$ a farthing in 3*s.* 10*s.* a-week, however, is only equal to 1*s.* 8*d.* a-day; the practical tax, therefore, by 15*s.* addition to the quarter of wheat from the Corn-laws, on the consumption of bread by the operative, is only $2\frac{1}{2}$ farthing per diem, equal to $12\frac{3}{4}$ farthings, (or about 3*d.*) per week; double this for meat, and it will be about 6*d.* per week. The increase to the price of the goods from 15*s.*, added to the quarter of wheat, is illustrated thus. 15*s.* is $\frac{3}{4}$ of 1 per cent.; or $\frac{1}{132}$ part, and the buyer would have to distinguish between goods worth 132*l.* and 133*l.* Supposing the produce of a man's hands with 50*l.* per annum wages to be worth 100*l.* Will the foreign market, (it is said) beating us by 10, 20, 30, 50 per cent., be recovered by a saving of $\frac{3}{4}$ per cent., or would the manufacturer be fairly entitled to make any material reduction in the wages of his operative under a repeal of the Corn-laws. But would not the manufacturers attempt it? And would not the operative be consequently a considerable loser by the change? Not trusting to my own estimate alone, I asked a gentleman most conversant with commercial matters, and who happened to be going down to Manchester at the time, to get the same question solved there; it was a gentleman well known to many Members of the House as perhaps the best writer on commercial subjects of the day, Mr. Burgess, of the banker's circular. The following is his answer:—

"It may be set down that fifteen shillings per quarter on wheat could not affect the price of the commonest goods, say such as are worth about double the price of the most ordinary unbleached calicoes more than a quarter of one per cent. It is the addition or remission of a tax about equal to a banker's commission on a running account. One half, at least, of the cotton manufacturers of Lancashire and Yorkshire have voluntarily imposed upon themselves a tax of equal amount by opening banker's accounts with joint stock banks, they never having such before 1826."

Such, Sir, appear to be the real effects of the Corn-laws on goods and wages; such the terrible results of the so much abused system of Corn-laws.

I had intended, but have not the time, to go into the question of the probable consequences of our being shut gradually out of many foreign markets; and how this country should prepare itself to avert that prospect. At present the greater part of our manufacturing embarrassment arises from home rather than foreign competition. The increase to the credit system in this country and America between 1833 and 1836, led to a great demand for goods, and for enlarged means of producing them.

The number of power looms in England and Scotland were, in

1820 about	14,000	nearly 700 per cent. increase.
1830	55,000	
1833	100,000	

Dr. Kay, an assistant Poor-law commissioner, in a report to the central board, dated July 22, 1835, stated, that 3,753,000*l.* was at that time in the course of being laid out in mills and factories in the cotton districts of Lancashire and its immediate vicinity, and would be in operation in two years and a half.

When the Bank of England in its effort to protect itself, towards the close of 1836, to preserve inviolate the standard of value, withheld from the great American houses, and in other ways restricted accommodation, the panic which ensued, and especially the embarrassment in the United States, contracted the demand for English manufactures just at the moment when all these new mills and factories were coming into operation. This caused a temporary over-production and a fall of profits; but this is a cause, I trust, shortly to be removed. I have stated, before, that under these embarrassments of our foreign trade we still have the most valuable resource in the home trade; and I give here from Mr. Mc Queen's able and elaborate letter to Lord Melbourne the proportions in the principle articles of export between the home and foreign trade.*

Thus showing that our main reliance is on the home trade: Ireland, also, is a rapidly growing source of demand for our manufacturers, and we have still 15,000,000 acres in the United Kingdom fit for cultivation, and now uncultivated, out of which customers to our manufacturers must gradually spring up. Our colonies also are a fertile and increasing source of demand: and in India alone there is 100,000,000 population under the immediate rule of this empire, with 50,000,000 of tributaries who merely await ordinary justice and the commonest facilities which are due from the governors to the governed, to afford a tenfold larger custom for our manufactures than any we have yet possessed. Let us cultivate these resources within our own control; abolish the despotic uncertainty of the land-tax in India, and rule our colonies with a paternal and fostering sway, and I have no fears for my country for generations to come.

Sir, I have now done except to repeat in two words the grounds of my defence of the Corn-laws. I uphold them, 1st, as a means of occupation, employment and custom to five-sixths of the population; 2nd, as a protection to the cultivator under the greater direct and general taxation he bears, in comparison with other countries; 3rd, As a protection to the property of the owner and tenant invested in the soil. And I think I have shown, how in tending to effect these results, the comparatively small (if any) injury the Corn-laws inflict on the other classes of the community. In treating this great question Sir; I have endeavoured to do it dispassionately and calmly, and if in the course

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* See Table.

* *Comparative Value of the Home and Foreign Trade of Great Britain in certain articles.*

SUNDRY MANUFACTURED ARTICLES.	Produced.	Exported.	Home trade greater than Foreign Trade in the chief articles of Export.
1834. Cotton goods - - -	£52,513,586	£20,513,586	260 pr cent.
„ Woollen goods - - -	44,250,000	5,736,871	770
„ Linen goods - - -	15,421,186	2,579,658	600
„ Silk ditto - - -	13,425,510	637,013	2,100
„ Iron, hardware, and cutlery	38,170,600	2,869,437	1,300
„ Brass and copper - -	4,900,192	961,606	510
„ Cabinet wares, papers, &c.	14,000,000	377,941	3,700
Totals - - -	170,537,459	33,666,112	500 pr cent.

of my argument I have uttered anything to hurt the feelings of any class, I sincerely regret it. Arguments certainly have been urged against the Corn-laws, which are calculated to excite a degree of warmth, and I may have been guilty of it, for instance, such as would depreciate the value and importance of the landed, with a view of exaggerating that of the manufacturing interest. To hear the language which is spoken by some who advocate the repeal of the Corn-laws, one would almost imagine, that this isle of ours, in all its richness and beauty—the offspring of centuries of British liberty, energy, and industry, had sprung into existence but yesterday—the creature and spawn of Manchester; that history was a fiction, and the monuments of the dead forsworn. [*Loud cries of hear, hear, hear!*] What! was England, not England in the time of our Edwards and our Harrys, of Cressy and Agincourt—in the days of Elizabeth and Burleigh, of Cromwell and Blake, of William and of Ann, of Marlborough, and Blenheim, and of Chatham—of whom it is said that not a gun could be fired in Europe without his permission? And was she relatively less respected or feared, less envied or admired than in these latter days, even of Wellington and Grey, of Russell and of Peel—in those days of frugal industry and sober earnings, as in these of grinding competition, iron-hearted philosophy, and of a frigid and gambling hypothesis. The foreign trade, as an offset, is doubtless a most valuable adjunct to the resources of the State, while it continues innoxious to the interests of industry at home; but, Sir, I will not consent to place the whole exertions and employment of my countrymen on so insecure and treacherous a base as that of a foreign trade, daily, we are told, slipping from under our feet, and hourly at the mercy, of the caprice, the tyranny, the necessity of other Powers. And who are the advisers of a policy like this? Those who declare they owe no allegiance to this soil. In the list of their moral obligations they do, indeed, seem to have excluded gratitude for having been nurtured, fostered, even fondled into existence, at many a temporary sacrifice of those on whom they would now turn again to rend them. "Owe no allegiance to the soil." Sir, then far, far distant—aye, and cursed be the day, when they and their schemes shall preponderate in the councils of this Empire; schemes which would place the welfare and happiness of our people on a foundation, to-day expanded to a world, to-morrow contracted to a point; reducing us to the condition of a pyramid inverted on its apex—vibrating, reeling, tottering to our fall; with no stability for our institutions—no protection for our poor. No! give me the broad lands of England and Ireland on which to rest the solid and lasting fabric of our national greatness. Hold we and abide we by them, who will hold and abide by us, rather than by those who boast of their power to fly from us—who are "the tenants of a day, and have no interest in the inheritance." Yes, Sir, the land and the labour, of our country have thriven together for many a good long day, and with God's blessing they will yet again; yielding to us the same symbols and the same fruits which they have heretofore developed — a happy, grateful, contented peasantry—a joyous, open-hearted, open-handed yeomanry—a liberal and hospitable gentry; each in their place and degree, and through the wide ramifications of society and industry to which their influence extended—dispensing peace and good-will to all around them; and forming, in the close identity of interest which they exhibited, and in the high honour and devotion of character which they displayed—the noblest and strongest bulwark against external invasion or internal oppression, that ever existed in any age or any country. The hon. Member concluded by moving the direct negative to the motion of the hon. Member for Wolverhampton.

Mr. *Poulett Thomson.*—Sir, I suppose it is not likely that the present debate will terminate this night, but I rise for the purpose of addressing the House, because I shall not be able, I fear, to take another occasion of doing so on the present subject, in consequence of the indisposition under which I labour. I therefore must, however late in the evening, throw myself upon the indulgence of the House, but in return, I will endeavour to compress my observations, and the arguments I mean to bring forward upon the present occasion, into the smallest possible compass. It would, indeed, be extremely difficult now to say anything new upon a matter which has already been so much discussed, and which has been canvassed so frequently both in and out of this place. Before I proceed, however, I I must say that I rejoice that this question is at last brought before the House in the manner in which it has been introduced by my hon. Friend; that it has been placed on those grounds on which I think it ought alone to be discussed, with reference to the general interests of the community, and not of any particular class. I have never disguised my own opinion from those Gentlemen, many of them Friends of mine, who, to their credit, began the agitation on this subject—I have never disguised my opinion from them, that they rather injured their own cause, and the objects they seek to accomplish, by narrowing the grounds on which they pressed their claims. I am not surprised that, feeling as they must naturally do, their own interests deeply involved, affected as they were in their own own pursuits and their own business, they should have so narrowed the grounds upon which they stood; but, for my part, I confess I never wished to treat the subject in any other way than with reference, as I have before said, to the general interests of the country. I was glad to find, that my hon. Friend, the Member for the North Riding of Yorkshire, had at first been inclined to meet the question, now under our consideration in an equally fair and manly manner. That hon. Gentleman has, yielding to the advice of others, which no doubt he has reason for doing, and acting upon what are doubtless prudential considerations, flinched from the proposition which he himself announced—he has retreated from his own position, and now means to meet that motion with a negative, and not to press the resolutions of which he has given notice. I own I can understand very well why he does so with regard to the first resolution which stands on the Notice Book; I have thought it likely that but very few supporters would probably be found for that resolution which my hon. Friend originally meant to propose. It was too absurd to find friends. But with regard to his second resolution, although he withdrew it, I can see no reason why it should be withdrawn, unless my hon. Friend is prepared to vote with me. I know no grounds on which it is possible to refuse to go into a Committee of the House, unless we are prepared to agree to what my hon. Friend had at first intended to say, namely; that the law as it at present stands is good, has worked well, has answered its purpose, and ought to be maintained. Now I am prepared to contend for the exact reverse of that proposition, and to say, that these laws are injurious to the general interests of the community, and it is for that reason, and with a view to change them that I agree to the proposition of the hon. Mover. It has been stated, that it is the object of my hon. Friend, the Member for Wolverhampton, in making his present motion, to repeal totally and immediately the existing Corn-laws. Now I have heard nothing to that effect fall from my hon. Friend. I know the opinions which my hon. Friend entertains, yet when he goes into Committee on the subject, it does not follow that the House will be bound to assent to them. If I were asked whether it would, in my opinion, be beneficial to this country to abolish the Corn-laws, my answer would be, that it would. If I were asked whether it might not be better to have even a free trade in corn, I would reply in the affirmative also. But when I state this I am perfectly aware, that there are considerable and weighty interests to be looked into, which can not be lightly treated; and that they must be all fairly considered, and equitably dealt with, and time given gradually to effect a change. I, therefore, taking a practical view of the subject, am ready to go into a Committee upon it in the hope, that we shall be able to introduce such a practical change in the existing system of laws, as may prove really beneficial to all parties, and which will not injure any interests whatsoever, and I contend that all those who may not be inclined to support my view of the alteration requisite, but who yet do not go the whole length of maintaining that the law has worked well, and is the best which can be established, are bound to go into committee with me, because there and there alone they will have a full and ample opportunity of opposing or supporting the propositions which may be submitted to them. There they may propose their own schemes if they please or they may assent to mine. [*Cheers.*] I would ask my noble Friend (Lord Stanley), who cheers, if, according to the forms of this House, it is possible to introduce any change in these laws in any other manner than by going into committee? There and there alone we shall be fully able to discuss the various expedients which may be deemed necessary in this instance, and there I shall be prepared to submit to them my own particular plans, to be adopted or not, as the House thinks fit. But having said thus much, I feel bound to assert now, that there are parts of the speech of the hon. Mover with which I am not prepared to agree, particularly with reference to what my hon. Friend had stated, about the price of corn. To these slight differences, however, it is not necessary particularly to allude.

The question has been put fairly, in this simple way, who is for, and who is against, the present system of Corn-laws unaltered, as they stand.

The first point then is, what is the present law? and here I agree certainly with the hon. Member for the North Riding, who has made no real difference between the law of 1828 and that of 1815, or 1822. Whatever might have been the intention, practically the effect has been the same. My own argument is, that the two laws are practically the same. The present law professed to afford a remedy for the fluctuating prices which had been found so injurious to different interests in the country, and it accordingly proposed a fluctuating scale of duties instead of the prohibition up to a certain price and free admission afterwards as fixed by the law of 1815, and the law of 1822. Its object was, to a certain degree, to place the corn trade something upon the same footing as the other branches of trade in the country, and to allow the importation of corn not merely at the price where under the former law prohibition ceased, but at a price far below that point. Now, that result has not been obtained, for, although it professed to allow corn to come in at a lower rate, yet the result has not answered expectations, and in this respect matters stand nearly in the same position with respect to the import of foreign corn as under the old corn-law. The corn of foreign countries is not brought into the market when the price is such as the present law contemplated. It is only when the price is such as would have permitted foreign corn to be sold under the old law, that foreign corn is brought into the market. This is clearly proved by a document I hold in my hand. Since the law came into operation in July, 1828, up to the 31st of December 1838, there have been 6,788,000 quarters of corn imported. Now, we have frequently had corn at very high prices in this country during that time, and if the law had operated according to what the framers of it at the time expected (the price of 70*s*. being considered by the law of 1822 as the famine price), it would be supposed that a considerable quantity of corn would have come in at a lower price; whereas, of the 6,788,000 quarters of corn, 5,089,000 quarters came in paying a duty less than 6*s*. 8*d*., the duty when the price was 71*s*., the rate at which prohibition ceased under the old law having been 70*s*. So that under the present law 75*s*. per cent. of all corn imported came in at a price above 70*s*., and only 25 per cent. came in at a lower price. It stands to reason, that it should be so for it must be known by any one who watches the operations of the corn-market, that when corn begins to rise, all persons holding corn in bond do not bring out their corn, paying 16*s*. or 20*s*. duty, but what they do is this, they wait, and operate on the market, till at last the price rises to 73*s*. and corn comes out at 1*s*. duty. Is this a benefit? But before I come to this point, I turn—having stated the effect of the law—to the hon. Members opposite, and ask what were the intention and views of the framers of it? What was the declared object of the committee of 1821? The great object to be secured was to obtain a steady price for corn; a price free from fluctuation. The admirable report, framed by the committee of which Sir Thomas Gooch was chairman, was written by Mr. Huskisson, and introduced under the auspices of the chairman—that admirable report, setting out with a statement, clear and convincing as to what the law should be, required above all things that prices should be steadied and fluctuations prevented; and I am astonished that in the Corn-bill of 1827, or the law of 1828, the recommendation of that report was not followed up, and that the fluctuating scale was introduced. I hold in my hand a document which will prove beyond a possibility of doubt that the object contemplated by the framers of the present law was the prevention of the fluctuation in the market, and I shall take the liberty of reading that document to the House. I hold in my hand an extract from the speech of the author of the bill of 1827; and what did Mr. Canning say, in introducing that bill?

> "It seems to me desirable, that if there is to be a trade in corn at all, it should be conducted as far as possible on the principle of other trades, in a sober regular course, and not by perpetual jerks and impulses, arising out of extraordinary emergencies. I am persuaded that if importation be always free, taking sufficient security against an inundation of the home market, it will flow in a regular equable current, supplying the real wants of the country without overwhelming it; instead of ren-

dering the trade, as now, under the principle of prohibition, a perpetual series of alterations between a drought and a deluge. I think this project will tend to equalize the prices, and keep that equalization of prices steady. The market will, indeed, assume such a steadiness, that, instead of a fluctuation between 112*s*. at one time and 38*s*. at another, the vibrations will probably be found to be limited within the small circle of from about 55*s*. to about 65*s*. The plan will provide against the mischief arising from sudden gluts in the market at one time, and sudden dearths compelling us to legislate occasionally in contradiction to our general system of legislation at another."*

Now, what I ask is whether these expectations have been fulfilled? Can any man who has attended to the prices of corn in this country pretend that such has been the result? I hold in my hand a statement of the highest and lowest prices of corn in each year, from 1828. In 1828, the highest price of wheat was 76*s*. the lowest, 51*s*.: the difference, 49 per cent. In 1829, highest price 75*s*., lowest 55*s*.; the difference, 37 per cent. In 1830, highest price, 74*s*. lowest 55*s*.; difference 35 per cent. In 1831, highest price 75*s*. lowest 59*s*., the difference between the highest and lowest prices was 27 per cent.; in 1832, highest price 63*s*., lowest 51*s*., 24 per cent.; in 1833, highest price 56*s*., lowest 49*s*., 14 per cent.; in 1834, highest price 49*s*., lowest 40*s*., 22 per cent.; in 1835, highest price 44*s*., lowest 36*s*., 22 per cent. In 1836, the highest price was 60*s*., the lowest 36*s*.; the difference 68 per cent. In 1837, highest price 60*s*., lowest 51*s*.; difference 17 per cent. In 1838, highest price 78*s*., lowest 52*s*.; difference 49 per cent. Between 1836 and 1839 there was a difference of 116 per cent. between the highest and lowest prices. I ask whether the object as explained in the passage I have read from Mr. Canning's speech has been attained? I can show, by returns with which I will not now trouble the House, that under another state of the law dissimilar to that which exists at present, the fluctuations during ten years were never half so much.

But my hon. Friend has said that we must look to other considerations with reference to other interests,—tenants, labourers, and others. I am ready to examine the question upon that ground, and I am prepared to contend that, as the law stands, it is most injurious to all these interests. But, before I go on with this part of my argument, I call upon the Gentlemen on the other side to say, why corn should have a duty different from all other articles. There are not fluctuating duties upon wine, or timber, upon silk or cotton; why then upon corn? On what principle is it that, after the system laid down by Mr. Canning has so signally failed, we continue to apply a different law to corn from that applied to other articles? For whose interest then, I ask, is all this done, for the tenant? who can deny that fluctuation of price must be most injurious to him? He can never tell what he ought to pay for his land, what return he ought to get for his capital. To the uncertainty which already exists in all farming operations, you superadd an additional amount of uncertainty and you call that a good law for the tenant.

With regard to the landlord, instead of entering into an argument to show how, on theory and on principle, the law must be injurious to him, I must be permitted to advert to a document, respecting which there can be no dispute, which will be a good test of what the agriculturist has experienced from the law. If the law be what it has been represented by its advocates, we have a right to expect that its effects on agriculture will be beneficial; but I find, from the records before me, that since 1828, there has been no less than five King's Speeches in which reference was made to the depressed state of agriculture, and which called the earliest attention of Parliament to the subject, with a view of devising relief. Upon the 4th of February, 1830, his late Majesty, in his Speech from the Throne, said—

> "His Majesty laments that, notwithstanding this indication of active commerce, distress should prevail among the agricultural and manufacturing classes in some parts of the United Kingdom."

But that, however, was not considered strong enough, and an Amendment was moved by the right hon. Baronet, the Member for Kent, opposite, the tendency of which was to describe the distress which prevailed, in more forcible language. In 1831, upon the 6th of December, the King, in his Speech from the Throne, said—

> "I deeply lament the distress which still prevails in many parts of my dominions; and for which the preservation of peace both at home and abroad will, under Divine Providence, afford the best and most effectual remedy."

In 1833, there was no mention of the

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* Hansard New Series, vol. xvi. p. 770.

subject, but committees were appointed to inquire into the state of trade and agriculture. In 1834, the King's Speech contained the following paragraph:—

"I have to lament the continuance of distress amongst the proprietors and occupiers of land."

In 1835, the Speech from the Throne said—

"I deeply lament that the agricultural interest continues in a state of great depression."

In 1836, his Majesty said—

"I lament that any class of my subjects should still suffer distress, and the difficulties which continue to be felt in important branches of agriculture may deserve your inquiry with a view of ascertaining whether there are any measures which Parliament can advantageously adopt for the alleviation of this pressure."

There were five King's Speeches and a Committee of the House in one year, when the subject was not mentioned in a King's Speech, within a few years, all indicating an increased or continued distress amongst the agricultural class; and after that we are told, that the present system works well, and that the law requires no change! Really I know not how posterity may read history, but I think it must seem hereafter that those Gentlemen who so recently complained of their condition, and then boasted that the law under which they suffered was the best that could be enacted, must have committed some great mistake.

As to the labourer, I cannot understand how the labourer can be otherwise than benefitted by a change of the law. The only thing which he can bring to market is his labour, the price which he obtains for it, depends upon the ratio which the supply has to the demand in the market. Whatever increases the demand for labour, raises his wages,—whatever diminishes it, reduces them. I do not advert of course to what may be the case in some agricultural districts, where, owing to the difficulty of transporting labour, and the effect of the old Poor-law, the labourer is reduced to the mere *minimum* of subsistence; but in a healthy state of society and generally through this country, no one will deny that my position is correct. How does your Corn-law then operate upon him? By diminishing the means of employment, it lowers the wages which he receives. By raising the price of food, it makes his money wages of still less value to him. I may be told, indeed, that he would lose employment by so much less British corn having to be cultivated; but if so (which I do not believe to be the case) a greater quantity of foreign would come in because it was cheaper, and it must be paid for by something; the labour of this country which would take the place of the labour thus displaced. If foreign corn were, therefore, admitted, it would be manifestly for his benefit. If corn became cheap, the labourer's wages would be of more value, and the effect would be to increase the demand for labour, whilst it decreased the price of the labourer's food. But above all, a greater equality of prices would ensue, which would have a tendency to benefit the labourer, inasmuch as he is always a sufferer from the fluctuation of prices. If any man, indeed, more than another has an interest in the alteration of the Corn-laws, with a view to avoid fluctuations, it is the labourer. It is well known that the wages of labour do not rise or decrease as rapidly and in the same proportion as the price of provisions, and it is this fact which made the present system inflict great injury on him. In 1835 and 1836, when the prices of corn were low, the wages of labourers in the agricultural districts, where there is often a supply greater in amount than the demand for labour, were decreased to match the price of corn; and when an increase, and a rapid increase, took place in the price of corn, there has not been a corresponding increase in the amount of labourer's wages, so that he has nearly the same amount of money to receive for his labour when the price of corn has been doubled; therefore I maintained that no class of persons are more interested in the subject than the labouring class, nor is the condition of any class more influenced by the Corn-laws. My hon. Friend said that one of the objects which would be achieved by a change in the law would be to reduce the wages of the labourers to 4*s.* per week, and in this resolution he included manufacturing as agricultural labourers—I entirely deny that. Now, what are the demands of the labourers? They say they want employment—they want the means of getting a livelihood—they want to be placed in a position which will enable them to earn their bread. That is one reason why I felt that a change is necessary, because I am convinced that if the Corn-laws were changed there would be an increase in the demand for workmen, and the rate of wages would be increased with the increased demand for their labour.

The next point to which my hon. Friend (Mr. Cayley) adverted, was the effect a change in the present system would have upon the trade of the country. It is not my intention to follow my hon. Friend through those minute calculations into which he has gone with regard to the prices of cochineal, indigo, cotton twist, and other articles; for to attempt to compare the variations in the prices of commodities of that kind, which depend upon so many various and conflicting circumstances, with the price of the great necessary of life, seems to me to be quite beside the question. All the commodities to which my hon. Friend has alluded are subject, in consequence of the moderate amount of the supply, to speculation in the market to a great extent; they are subject to the chances of different markets in Europe far more than corn can possibly be. But my hon. Friend has said—and here I ventured to differ from him very considerably—my hon. Friend has said, "Why, your home trade is the only trade you have got to look to, and I would not see the country sacrificed for the sake of a foreign trade." Now, I must tell my hon. Friend that it is a little too late to talk of this nation being independent of other countries; my hon. Friend might have said such was the case one hundred, or at least seventy or eighty years ago; but the time is past, and now England has a large population dependent altogether upon her foreign trade. I do not say that the home trade is not beneficial to this country, and I cannot conceive how the home trade is to be lost, nor has any attempt been made to shew that it would, but now that millions and millions of the population of Great Britain are dependant upon the foreign trade [*Cheers.*] I beg to ask hon. Gentlemen who cheer me whether it is not too much to talk lightly of that trade, which supported so large a proportion of the population of the country. Do hon. Gentlemen know the amount of the exports from this country —do they known what the foreign trade is? Why, the country scarcely imports any thing but raw materials; it imports of them to the extent of between 25,000,000*l.* and 30,000,000*l.* for the purposes of home consumtion or for manufactures of be sent away again. What I complain of in the existing Corn-laws is this—that this country has by those laws raised against it many of the other nations of the world—not because we do not take corn from them, but on account of the uncertainty which is thrown into the trade with them in consequence of our system of duties, which declare that England shall never apply to foreigners if she can possibly help it, by which we have done every thing that is possible to shut the markets of Europe and America against the British manufactures, and have induced nations to adopt a hostile policy in commercial matters which would never have occurred but for these laws. Do I speak without book when I state this? An hon. Gentleman behind me has moved for the production of whatever correspondence had taken place between the Government of this country and those of other nations on the subject of the Corn-laws, or for any propositions made or notices given by foreign countries willing to trade with this country, provided the present system of Corn-laws were done away with. Those documents I shall produce to my hon. Friend and the House, but I must at the same time mention that they are a class of communications which do not generally take place in an official form; they are more generally the result of private letters, and therefore the information contained in them is not so full as I could desire. But some time ago a gentleman, Mr. M'Gregor, was sent to Germany to inquire into the condition of the German League, and I have with me letters I have received from him, bearing on the subject now before the House, and which I will read. This is dated in 1836. He says:—

> "I am perpetually told, that England must reduce her own tariff before she can reasonably expect Germany to do so."

And in reply to Mr. M'Gregor, the foreign minister for Wurtemberg thus expresses himself:—

> "I am opposed to anything like particular protection given to any branch of industry, being convinced that such protection is a general tax on the community.
>
> "We have few articles besides coarse linens and natural produce, as corn, and cattle, and probably some of the wool, which we send by the Neckar and Rhine to Holland, that would find their way to your markets at reduced duties; but, settle the preliminaries of a commercial treaty with Prussia, and I presume there will not be much difficulty in Wurtemberg adhering to it."

I will read another extract in relation to our commerce with Prussia:—

> "M. Kuchné, the Prussian Commissiary, is a gentleman of intelligent views, and seems fully to comprehend the importance of a commercial treaty with England, but argues our Corn-laws are the supreme obstacle. He is at the same time said to be the most skilful member of the Congress."

And, again—

> "Baron Smit, the Wurtemberg Minister at the Bavarian Court, the proprietor of the *Germanic Union* tells me that he can discover no objection whatever in meeting the views of foreign States to a reasonable extent in reducing the high duties in the Germanic tariff, provided that such States will act with something like reciprocity towards Germany; but he also contends, that the British tariff ranges much higher than the Germanic tariff as twenty to thirty per cent. compared to ten per cent., and on linens, and every article from Germany, as wood, corn, and some other natural produce, much higher."

On the 14th July M. Kuchné said,—

> "If any arrangement be entered into, you must begin at Berlin, and a reduction of your corn duties to a fixed rate must be preliminary to any understanding as to a reduction on our part of duties on your commodities."
>
> "Without saying how such an arangement could be effected, I alluded to the proposed reduction of the duty on timber, and such as would probably be made on some other articles, as linens, Nuremburg wares, mineral water, &c.; but he took his stand upon corn, saying the other reductions were but of little consequence."

Those extracts with which I have troubled the House will show how our foreign trade has been affected by the Corn-law system, which has been said to work so well, that no system can be better devised. So much with regard to their effect. But we have been told, that some protection is necessary. I would not, if such were the opinion of the House, object to a fair protection; but what I object to is, the present mode of administering this protection, and I contend, that it produces no advantage.

I do not object to that fair protection being given which may be demanded by those additional burthens which it is supposed the land pays. I wish for protection to that extent, but what we quarrel with is the mode in which the law gives the present protection, which I contend is of no advantage to the interest it is intended to benefit, while it is a detriment to others. At the same time my hon. Friend has made a most exaggerated statement of the amount of the protection required in consequence of what he has been pleased to call the burthens on land; but I confess I cannot follow my hon. Friend's calculations, so as to be satisfied with the correctness of that statement. I am, however, willing to admit that there have been burthens which press exclusively upon land; many of them, however, have been removed, and I should, therefore, like to examine into them in Committee; and if the grievance be substantiated, then to give a fair protection. The burthen which has chiefly been alluded to is the poor-rate.

Now, the returns for the year 1833, showed the proportions of all burthens on land and other property; and of the poor-rate and highway-rate, land paid, it appeared, sixty-five per cent., and houses and other property paid thirty-five per cent. Now, taking the same proportion in 1838, the whole amount of poor-rate, highway-rate, and other imposts, was about 5,186,000*l.*, of which land paid 3,275,000*l.*, and other property paid 1,911,000*l.*; or again, taking the poor-rate alone, it amounted last year to 4,123,000*l.*, of which land pays 2,604,000*l.*, and houses and other property paid 1,519,000*l.* I state this to show that those burthens do not exclusively fall on land, and that other property pays very considerably towards them, and I must remark, that when a balance comes to be made out of the account on both sides, the probate and legacy duty of 2,284,000*l.*, which is paid exclusively by other interests, must be taken into account and set against the other charges.

It has also been said, that the Malt-tax is a burthen on land. I regret that the right hon. Baronet, the Member for Tamworth, was not in his place to answer that assertion when it was made—answer it he could, for I have heard the right hon. Baronet make a speech on the subject of Malt-tax (and I have voted with the right hon. Baronet in consequence of that speech and the doctrines therein laid down), in which he established irresistibly that the Malt-tax was not a tax on land, but a tax paid by the consumer. Undoubtedly, by limiting consumption, it affects the distribution of crops, and is a grievance to that extent, but to that extent only.

Then, I must ask, why it is that the House refuses to make any alteration in the existing Corn-laws. Is that refusal from a fear of lowering the price of corn? My own opinion is (and I do not state it now for the first time), that by a change, the prices, on an average of years, would not be much lower than they are at present; it is my firm belief, that wheat could not be imported to be laid in at 30*s.*, 32*s.*, or 33*s*, per quarter, as has been most erroneously asserted—that is, in my judgment, perfectly out of the question; if there were a regular demand for it, and the supply was steadily taken, it would be impossible, from any calculation that has been made, that wheat could be brought into this country under 40*s.* or 50*s.* per quarter. The House ought to remember, that this country has this circumstance to contend with—that the further from rivers or the sea-shore, or other means of communication we go to procure our supplies, the greater will be the expense; and not only a greater expense according to common progression, but according to an infinitely increasing progression. In my travels I have known, in a province of Russia, for instance, wheat sell at 5*s.* per quarter, but such was the expense of carriage and the charges of transport, that it could not be carried to a neighbouring province at a less price than 20*s.* or 25*s.* It is not many years ago since in that country, which forms such a bugbear to the hon. Gentleman opposite, I mean the South of Russia, when the crops failed, it was found to be cheaper to send the population to the food in a distant province, than to transport the food to them. But if hon. Members are so afraid of lowering the price, I must be permitted to ask them to go back and see how little their fears on other subjects have been justified by the events which have ensued. I will, as an instance, take the article of wool. Hon. Members will remember the debates which took place when a proposal was made to admit foreign wool into this country, and when it was declared by a noble Friend of mine in another place, that the sheep farmers of this country would be utterly and entirely ruined, that it would be impossible for them to compete with those flocks which produced wool so cheaply abroad. Now, what was the result? Why, that the sheep farmer in this country now receives a higher price for his wool than he did before the change took place.

This will appear from the following statement of the average prices of Leicester long wools from the years 1821 to 1838, inclusive, per tod of 28 lbs.:—Average price in 1821, 32*s.* 6*d.*; in 1822, 29*s.*; in 1823, 26*s.*; in 1824, 29*s.*; in 1825, 40*s.* 6*d.*; in 1826, 28*s.*; in 1827, 26*s.*; in 1828, 24*s.*; in 1829, 21*s.* 6*d.*; in 1830, 21*s.* 6*d.*; in 1831, 30*s.*; in 1832, 30*s.* 6*d.*; in 1833, 38*s.* 6*d.*; in 1834, 46*s.*; in 1835, 39*s.*; in 1836, 41*s.*; in 1837, 37*s.*; and in 1838, 38*s.* The high range of prices for the last six years is to be ascribed to the increasing export. Although the trade was thrown open in 1826, it was some time before the export was sufficiently great to affect prices. It was the speculation induced by the over-issue of paper in 1825, previous to the panic, which occasioned the high prices of 1825. If the export of wool were prohibited, as formerly, it is the opinion of well-informed persons that the price of Leicester long wool would not exceed 25*s.* per tod; the free trade in wool has, consequently, given the agricultural interest a clear advantage of 15*s.* per tod for the last six years on the whole of the long wool growth of the kingdom, which is estimated at 300,000 packs of eight tods each, or equivalent to 1½ million sterling. And this great advantage was literally forced on the agricultural interest, who anticipated from free trade in wool the absolute ruin of the wool grower. This, then, was the result of their apprehensions—this was the effect of throwing open the trade in wool.

But I now come to the last argument which had been urged by my hon. Friend, viz.—the dependance of this country upon foreigners in case a change were made in the present Corn-laws. I must repeat, that it is now too late to urge that argument, for, according to the report of the committee of 1834, this country is even now dependent upon foreigners in this respect; and the question really is, in what a state does this country stand now, under the present condition of the law with respect to this point? Why, this country has found that foreigners were inclined to shut their ports, to prevent the export of corn, because Great Britain is not a steady regular customer—that foreigners find they can carry on no beneficial trade with her, and that her demand is inconvenient instead of advantageous to them. That is one of my main arguments for wishing to change the present law. I contend, that foreigners may be made as much dependent on England for the sale of their corn as England is now dependent on them for the supply of that commodity. I contend, that if a regular fixed and steady trade was established with them, they would be no more able to prevent their corn from coming to the British market than the Americans are able to prevent their cotton. Is not this country dependent now upon America for cotton? It is true cotton is not a necessary of life, but still there are 1,500,000 people in this country dependent for their bread upon the cotton trade. I again repeat, that if there is not that mutual interest raised which will make each country dependent on the other, then there will be as much danger from the situation of a population engaged in all the great articles of foreign produce brought here for manufacture, as ever there could be from being dependent on foreign nations for a supply of corn. But the fact is, that at present foreigners look on the demand made on them by this country for corn, rather as a nuisance than otherwise; occurring only at seasons when corn is scarce it deranges the whole of their markets by its irregularity. Corn may be grown by them in expectation of some demand from here; it may be sent to the ports, where it sometimes lies for years, at heavy charges for warehouse-rent and loss of interest on the capital locked up all the time, until a sudden demand comes, and it is taken perhaps at a loss to the grower, the additional price being merely for those charges of rent and interest on capital. But what does the English purchaser pay? Why, because he wants the corn in a time of necessity, he must pay those additional charges, and the extra price is thus just as much thrown away as if so much of the corn were thrown into the sea from the ships which transport it to this country. On the other hand, foreign countries themselves, even suffer from the sudden rise of prices. All their relations are disturbed — the price of corn, perhaps low, is suddenly converted into a high price, and their own population suffer from the effects of the demand from this country. How different, however, would be the position of both if a regular steady trade were established!

I will not trouble the House further; I have, imperfectly I fear, but as well as I am able, expressed my opinion with regard to the existing Corn-laws. I have contended, that the law in its present state is injurious to the landlord, inasmuch as it produces uncertainty to him—I have contended it is injurious to the tenant, inasmuch as he never knows what he is about under the great fluctuations in prices—it is injurious to the labourer, because it deprives him of the employment he would otherwise have, and it is injurious to the manufacturer, because it fetters his industry and promotes foreign competition. This is my view of the case. It is upon these grounds that I recommend the House to assent to the motion of my hon. Friend. I will not attempt to use further argument, but I will venture, in conclusion, to address you in the words of one, my right hon. Friend, the Member for Pembroke, (Sir J. Graham); and I beg particularly to address them to those who, acting under a fear of low prices, pretend to seek protection for our corn. His words are these:—

> "The public opinion must be hostile to the present Corn-law. The receivers of rent are a very small body. Backed by public opinion they are almost omnipotent—in violation of public opinion they cannot long retain an exclusive advantage. The contest is fearful, for on what ground will it be decided? On the very topic which inflames to madness, that hunger, which breaks through walls, will be arrayed against them. The barriers of society will be broken down, and estates, distinctions, honors, swept away in one resistless torrent. Let those who seek high prices at all risks remember the words of Tacitus:—'Vulgus ad magnitudinem beneficiorum aderat, stultissimus quisque pecuniis mercabatur; apud sapientes cassa habebantur, quæ neque dari neque accipi salvâ republicâ, poterant.'"

In conclusion, I would say, that I only asked the House to go with me into Committee, and I shall then establish my case. I ask you to let me propose in that Committee the alteration I think beneficial; and I implore the House not heedlessly to reject a motion on which, I believe in my conscience, depend the welfare and the stability of the material interests of this country."

Sir *E. Knatchbull* spoke amidst many marks of impatience, and was understood to say that he trusted the House would indulge him with a few moments attention. He was perfectly aware of the difficulty of following a Gentleman who had made this subject his own. He thought, however, that some remarks of that right hon. Gentleman called for special observation. It had been asserted that there was—there could be—nothing novel in the present discussion; but, however, that observation must apply to the arguments, he thought there was great novelty in the position in which they now approached the matter. He had heard that night, with astonishment, a Minister of the Crown declare that agitation was the only way in which a change in the Corn-laws could be effected. On a question of this kind, in which the feelings, the interests, of the whole country were raised, he was amazed to hear a Minister of the Crown promulgate such doctrines. Were Ministers prepared to act in obedience to agitation? He had listened with the greatest attention to the whole of the right hon. Gentleman's speech in hopes of hearing what modification of the present laws he intended to propose in committee, but the right hon. Gentleman had given them no information whatever. They were asked to go into a committee of the whole House to consider the operation of the Act regulating the trade in corn, but not one word could they hear of the intentions of Government on the subject. The right hon. Gentleman had alluded to the speech of Mr. Canning in 1827. But what had been Mr. Canning's conduct? He had proposed a well-digested measure upon this subject, and proposed it boldly, upon his own responsibility. Why was not Mr. Canning's conduct imitated on the present occasion? He could tell the noble Lord opposite that the country expected that on a matter of this kind of great public moment, the Government would not shrink from the responsibility belonging to their official situations. Now, they not only declined to do so, but they would not even condescend to favour the House with an outline of their plan—if in point of fact they had any. What a contrast there was between the conduct of the Ministers of the Crown and the hon. Gentleman who brought forward the motion, who had acted in a manner bold, manly, and intelligible—the very reverse in every respect of the Government. The manufacturers had declared it to be their object to obtain the total and unqualified extinction of Corn-laws. They had not shrunk from stating their intention to withdraw from the landowners of the country every vestige of protection—to repeal the existing law, and to substitute no other. The right hon. Gentleman had not disclosed his plan, but co-operating with the originators of the motion made him cautious and suspicious, and would prevent him giving his assent to going into committee, lest he might be exposing himself to a coalition of the Government and the originators of the motion. The right hon. Gentleman had read a letter from a Prussian correspondent advocating a fixed duty—was that his plan? He had Mr. Canning's authority for saying that such a duty would be absurd. Mr. Canning said, that such a duty must be either too low or too high. If too low it would afford no protection, if too high it would go at the first moment of pressure. But the right hon. Gentleman would not follow the authority of Mr. Canning—he would keep them all in the dark and would ultimately attempt to establish a free trade in corn. The right hon. Gentleman said—"Why not treat corn as every other foreign article is treated?" He would answer this question of the right hon. Gentleman in two words. Because corn is the staple article of human sustenance, it would be madness to become dependent for its supply upon foreign countries. The real question was, whether they were to have protection or not? He begged that hon. Members would bear that in their minds. He told them that if they gave way on this occasion, the fixed duty, as it was termed, would not last two or three years. On this question he expected the support of many hon. Members opposite. He thought that the Chancellor of the Exchequer ought to side with them, for there was no part of the country in which the matter was more anxiously considered than in that with which the right hon. Gentleman was most immediately connected. But hon. Gentlemen might depend on this—that if they adopted the motion before the House, and allowed the introduction of foreign grain without payment of duty or a free trade in grain, they must also remove protection, and throw open the trade in all other articles of consumption in the country. For himself he could not understand how it was that the landlord could prosper whilst the tenant was in a state of adversity. He believed that their interests were closely mixed up together, and that it was not possible for one to prosper and the other to suffer. It was said also that the price of wages should be lowered, and that then the labourer would be more prosperous.

Judging from his own experience, however, he would say that the condition of the labourers was better when corn was tending to a high price than when it was low. It seemed to be the wish of the hon. Member for Wolverhampton to obtain a low price of corn that the wages of labour might be low, and that thus the expenses of producing manufactured articles should be reduced. But how low would the hon. Member reduce the wages? Did he not know that a great portion of the labourers' wages was expended in food, and supposing that the labourer now received 12*s*. a week, 6*s*. of which were expended in corn, he would have the remaining 6*s*. to purchase other articles; if, however, the rate of wages should be lowered from 12*s*. to 6*s*., and the price of corn should also be lowered one half, the labourer would have 6*s*. wages and 3*s*. to pay for corn, leaving him only 3*s*. instead of 6*s*. to expend in other articles; and he would ask the House and the country under which system they thought the labouring man would be best off? And he would also ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer under which system the produce of the taxes would be greatest, under the existing regulations, or upon the principles advocated by the hon. Member for Wolverhampton? There was one other question connected with this to which he wished to claim the attention of the House. He alluded to the Act for the commutation of tithes, which had been passed, with the almost unanimous concurrence of that House. If they deprived the growers of corn of their present protection, he presumed that the Tithe Commutation Act must also be repealed. The hon Member concluded his speech with declaring, that there were three incumbrances which it was necessary to remove, the establishment, the debt, and the aristocracy. With respect to the establishment, the hon. Member had said little —with respect to the debt, he did not know how, with the repeal of the Corn-laws, they could pay the interest on the debt; and he could not help expressing his own confident conviction that in such case the debt of the country could not be liquidated. And when the hon. Gentleman dealt so tenderly with what he called the aristocracy, a large class of her Majesty's subjects, under any point of consideration, he would like to know who the hon. Member included among his class of aristocracy. He took it that the nobility were included in that class, that the clergy were also included, and any person who was the owner of any considerable quantity of land; but might not smaller owners be included, and would the hon. Member advocate the extinction of this large class? He would, if his doctrine were carried out. If the doctrine were persisted in, he was sure that all well-wishers of their country would resist it by all the means in their power, for it would only produce such misery, ruin, and confusion, as had never yet been seen in this country. The aristocracy, as they were called, however, merited at the hands of the country a better consideration. It was not true, as the hon. Baronet who seconded the motion asserted, that the landlords had raised the price of the necessaries of life, and that, in order to do so, they had oppressed her Majesty's subjects. He would contradict this assertion with all the energy he could; and he would maintain that nothing could exceed the high and unblemished character of the landed proprietors in this country. He thought that the most secure course for the House to take, was that recommended by Mr. Huskisson, who had said that "the history of this country for the last 170 years clearly proves on the one hand that cheapness produced by foreign import is the sure forerunner of scarcity; and on the other, that a steady home supply is the only safe foundation of steady and moderate prices." Did the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Poulett Thomson) mean to say that this country was now dependent upon foreign countries for a supply of corn? He maintained that we were not, and that we ought not to become so. He hoped, therefore, that the great majority of the House would vote as he would do, and declare that the people of England should not be injured. His right hon. Friend at the conclusion of his speech had quoted the speech of the right hon. Baronet the Member for Pembroke, delivered some time since, and he (Sir Edward Knatchbull) would also conclude by reading an extract from the writings of a person of high authority in that House, and throughout Great Britain; it was the production of the noble Lord opposite (Lord J. Russell). It was in full concurrence with his (Sir E. Knatchbull's) own opinion. The letter which he would read could not give the noble Lord the opportunity of stating, as he had done in a late letter, that he had altered his opinions, for the sentiments contained in the extract he was about to quote were general and universal, and applicable at all times. The letter was written by the then Member for the county of Huntingdon, and he did not think that the noble Member for Stroud at the present day could differ in opinion from the noble Member for Huntingdon in 1822. The letter was dated

"Woburn Abbey, Jan. 14, 1822.

"It being impossible by means of the Corn Bill to restore the war prices, I beg of you seriously to consider whether a new Corn Bill is likely to do you at present any good whatever. Supposing you were allowed to frame it yourselves, or that the Legislature should enact a prohibition at all times to import any article, the produce of the soil of Great Britain, would your distress be at all relieved? I think not. I think also, if you agree thus far, you must also agree with me that any efforts in this direction are not likely to be attended with benefit to yourselves. For the truth of this I appeal to the best of all tests—the experience of last year. By active petitioning you obtained a committee on the state of agriculture. And what was the result? Evidence proving the distress beyond all doubt, and a report suggesting no relief but time and patience. Time has not yet brought you any consolation; and, as for patience, you surely did not require twenty-one Gentlemen to sit three months for the purpose of recommending that well-known virtue.

"But the committee have also advised an alteration of the Corn Bill. That is to say, they recommend a lower importation price with a duty. Whether such a law as a permanent system might not be better than the present I am not quite prepared to decide. But it is clear that lowering the importation price would bring you no relief for present distress. And I am inclined to believe that, with many sugared words, the framer of the report intended to lay the foundation for subverting the principle of the Corn Bill altogether, and introducing foreign corn at all times into the market; for the principle of admitting foreign corn when our own prices are low being once granted, it would be extremely difficult to counterbalance the taxes paid by the English farmer. A duty of 40*s.* or 50*s.* a quarter upon foreign corn could hardly be enacted, and if enacted, certainly would not be persisted in. But I am inclined to think, that if foreign corn were admitted, even if you had scarcely any taxes to pay, it would not be easy for the farmers of England, who require to live in a certain degree of respectability and comfort, to compete with the Lords of Poland and Russia, whose vassal peasantry are unacquainted with the wants of a civilized state. Corn is a manufacture (to use our new phraseology) cheaply produced in a fertile soil, by wretched ploughs, wretched horses, and wretched men.

"There is a party amongst us, however, distinguished in what is called the science of political economy, who wish to substitute the corn of Poland and Russia for our own. Their principle is, that you ought always to buy where you can buy cheapest. They repeat with emphasis that the nation pays a tax of 25,000,000*l.* yearly to the growers of corn. They count as nothing the value to the country of a hardy race of farmers and labourers. They care not for the difference between an agricultural and manufacturing population, in all that concerns morals, order, national strength, and national tranquillity. Wealth is the only object of their speculation; nor do they much consider the two or three millions of people who may be reduced to utter beggary in the course of their operations. This they call diverting capital into another channel. Their reasonings lie so much in abstract terms, their speculations deal so much by the gross, that they have the same insensibility about the sufferings of a people that a General has respecting the loss of men wearied by his operations.

"It is to these men, I suspect, that our Ministers are about to give up the question of trade in corn."

It was to these men that the Ministers now meant to give up the Corn-laws, it was for these men that the House was now called upon to interfere. He was sure, however, that the House would do its duty, and he trusted that the noble Lord opposite would, upon reflection, consider that the sentiments of the noble Member for Huntingdon in 1822 were infinitely more politic than those which had lately been expressed in that House. He would not trouble the House by going into a statement of details which had been fully discussed by others; but he earnestly asked the House, and he required of the Ministers, to refrain from giving up "the question of the trade in corn to this class of men."

Debate adjourned.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Wednesday, March 13, 1839.

MINUTES.] Bill. Read a second time:—Tithe Composition Arrears (Ireland).

Petitions presented. By Messrs. A. Holmes, D'Israeli, Parker, Mills, E. Tennant, G. Heathcote, Shaw, Cayley, B. Clive, Barry, and Lefroy, Col. Thomas, Lords Clive, and G. Lennox, Sir D. Norreys, and Sir J. Y. Buller, from a number of places, against the repeal of the Corn-laws.—By Messrs. Denison, Lister, Wakley, Gillon, Ewart, and Gibson Craig, and Sir Robert Ferguson, for the Repeal of the Corn-laws.—By the Attorney-General, from Edinburgh, in favour of the Prisons (Scotland) Bill.—By Mr. Bethel, from some places, against any system of National Education not founded on the Scriptures.—By Mr. O'Connell, from Dublin, for a line of Railway to facilitate the Communication between the two capitals.—By Mr. Pakington, from several places, for protection to the Established Church in Canada.—By Mr. F. French, from Roscommon, and Connaught, for Railway Communication.—By Mr. Denison, from one place, for the Repeal of the Malt tax.—By Mr. O'Connell, from Lomas, for Justice to Ireland, or the Repeal of the Union.—By Mr. Wyse, from Queen's County, to the same effect.—By Sir G. Staunton, and Lord G. Lennox, from several places, for the Repeal of the Beer Laws.—By Mr. F. Palmer, from Reading, against any Alteration in the Beer Laws.—By Mr. Lockhart, from a place in Ayrshire, for Church Extension in Scotland.—By Mr. G. Berkeley, from Gloucester, for the Enclosure of Waste Lands; and from the Hand-loom Weavers of Gloucester, for a Tax on all Looms, on which more than two persons are employed in one manufacture.—By Mr. G. Evans, from Dublin, against the Report of the Railway Commission.

CORN LAWS. — ADJOURNED DEBATE.] The *Speaker* having read the Order of the Day for resuming this debate,

Sir *W. Molesworth* rose and said—Sir, I trust the House will pardon my trespassing upon their patience in consideration of the great interests I represent, and of the anxiety felt by my constituents on this subject. I am convinced, that I give utterance to their sentiments as well as to my own feelings, when I declare that, in supporting and in voting for the motion of my hon. Friend, I do not merely seek the abrogation of all restrictions on the importation of food, but that I have in view the far more important object of establishing the principles of free trade in this country. That is my object. I acknowledge the evils of a Corn Law; I desire its repeal on account of its injurious effects; but, above all, I wish it abolished because it is the chief barrier to free trade; and if that barrier were removed, then the most powerful classes in this country, namely, those who possess and cultivate the land, would at once perceive how deeply their immediate interests are concerned in the removal of all other commercial restrictions. I desire freedom of trade on account of two very different classes of benefits—the one of an economical kind, affecting the production and distribution of wealth; the other of a moral and social kind, affecting the relations between members of this community, and the relations of this country with the nations of the globe. The economical advantages of free trade can best be shown by tracing the mischievous consequences of a contrary course of policy. With this object in view, I must refer to certain facts, alluded to by those highly intelligent and respectable petitioners, who lately sought permission to give evidence at the bar. I sincerely regret, that the House deemed it inconsistent, with due regard to public business, to accede to that petition. For, instead of being able to appeal to their high authority in confirmation of my opinions, I am now obliged to rest my statements upon my own assertions. Sir, after a most careful examination of parliamentary returns, and especially of those valuable tables of revenue and population, which we owe to the zeal and the industry of Mr. Porter, I think it can be proved beyond a doubt, first, that during the last twenty years the aggregate value in money of the exports of British produce and manufactures has not increased in anything like the same ratio in which the population and capital of this country have increased, or even in proportion to the wealth and population of those countries which are our chief customers; secondly, that the greater portion of any increase, that has taken place, in the aggregate value of our exports does not consist of highly manufactured goods, the cost of whose production mainly depends upon the wages of labour, but is composed of commodities, little removed from the state of the raw material, and which are sent abroad to form the bases of many of the best continental fabrics; and, lastly, that whilst there has been but a slight increase in the aggregate value in money of our exports, there has been a very great increase in the quantities exported, accompanied consequently with a general and progressive fall in the prices of our staple manufactures; and in addition I must observe that, according to the unanimous testimony of the best authorities, during the same period there has been a very considerable reduction in profits. In order to convince the House, if possible, of the accuracy of these statements, I have carefully compared the aggregate value and quantities of the chief exports of this country at the present period with the exports at the end of the two previous periods of ten years each. To avoid the anomalies which arise, and the objections that may fairly be urged, when a single year is selected, I have taken the averages of four years as the basis of comparison. I have compared, therefore, the averages of the four years ending with 1818, namely, 1815, 1816, 1817, and 1818; the four years 1825, 1826, 1827, and 1828; and the four last years, 1835, 1836, 1837, and 1838. I find that the value of our exports, on the average of the four years ending 1818, was 45,403,000*l.*; on the average of the four last years, 40,645,000*l.*; a decrease, therefore, since the period of 1818 of 4,758,000*l.*, or ten and a half per cent. During that period there has been a very great increase in the aggregate value of the half-manufactured goods exported. The increase in cotton yarns amounted in value to 4,260,000*l.*; and that of our exports of linen yarn, woollen yarn, wool, and of the different kinds of iron and steel has exceeded 2,100,000*l.*; making, in all, an increase of 6,360,000*l.* in the value of the exports of commodities, that have gone through the first stage of manufacture; an increase of above 180 per cent. in the same period, in which the whole value of our exports has fallen off ten per cent. Results of a similar description are to be obtained by a comparison between the periods of 1828 and 1838. On the average of the four years ending with 1828 our exports were 35,368,000*l.*; on the average of the last four years they were, as I have already said, 40,645,000*l.*; showing an increase, therefore, of 5,277,000*l.* or of about 14 per cent. But of that increase 3,094,000*l.* worth was of cotton yarn, and 2,000,000*l.* of linen and woollen yarn, wool, iron, and steel; making in all 5,940,000*l.*, or a little less than the whole increase of our exports from 1828 to 1838. Whilst, therefore, the aggregate value of all our exports has only increased 14 per cent., the increase of the primary materials of foreign manufactures had increased 107 per cent., or eight times as much. These facts are much more striking, when similar comparisons are made with regard to each of the great staple manufactures of this country. I will, therefore, with permission of the House, read a Table which I have drawn up upon this subject:—*

Thus it appears, on comparing the four years ending with 1838 to those ending with 1818, that there has been an increase on the aggregate value of the exports of cotton goods of only three and-a-half per cent.; during the same period the increase on the aggregate value of the exports of cotton yarn has been 185 per cent., or fifty times as great. Comparing the four years ending with 1828 to the four last years, the increase on the value of our trade in cotton goods has been twenty-two per cent., on cotton yarn ninety per cent., or four times as great. The same facts, with respect to the small increase, during the last twenty years, on the aggregate value of the exports of the higher descriptions of goods, and with respect to the great and continual increase on the aggregate value of the exports of those commodities which have merely passed through the preparatory stages of manufacture, may be observed with regard to productions in iron. Comparing the last four years with the four years ending with 1818, the aggregate value of hardwares exported has increased only six one-third per cent., but the aggregate value of iron and steel exported has increased ninety-three per cent.,

	Average of the Years 1815-16-17-18.	Average of the Years 1825-26-27-28.	Average of the Years 1835-36-37-38.	Increase per Cent. on the Averages	
				from 1818 to 1838.	from 1828 to 1838.
Value of Exports of Cotton Goods	£15,754,000	£13,373,931	£16,318,514	3½	22
Ditto Cotton Yarn ..	2,293,000	3,459,000	6,553,000	185	90
Ditto Hardwares and Cutlery	1,663,661	1,334,679	1,768,000	6 1-3	32
Ditto Iron and Steel ..	1,099,217	1,123,189	2,132,000	93	89
				Decrease.	
Ditto Woollen Goods	8,122,415	5,366,000	6,232,000	24	16
Ditto Woollen Yarn	....	32,853	341,634	....	939
Ditto Wool	....	26,520	334,429	....	1,161
				Increase.	
Ditto Linens	1,751,000	1,983,000	2,841,000	62	42
Ditto Linen Yarn	....	....	417,603	....	....

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* See Table.

or about fifteen times as much. In the same manner, comparing the last four years with the period of 1828, the exports of hardwares have increased thirty-two per cent. in value, those of iron and steel eighty-nine per cent., or twice as much. During the last twenty years the aggregate value of the exports of woollen manufactures has decreased twenty-four per cent. The exportation of woollen yarn and of British wool was prohibited till the close of 1824; comparing the averages of the four subsequent years with those of the four years ending with 1838, it appears that, whilst the aggregate value of the exports of woollen manufactures has increased but sixteen per cent., that of woollen yarn has increased 939 per cent., and of wool 1,161 per cent; that is the ratio of the increase on the exports of the raw material and of the half-manufactured commodity has been fifty times as great as that on our once highly-esteemed cloths. To Germany, Holland, Belgium, Russia, and France these materials of manufacture are chiefly sent, and, in return, the latter country especially sends us back our own wool and woollen yarn, worked up into articles of a description superior to those which we can produce at the same price (such, for instance, as the mouseline de laine), and undersells in London our manufacturers, notwithstanding a protecting duty of fifteen per cent. That protecting duty I for one would wish to see repealed, and in making this declaration I express the sentiments of thirty-three thousand of my constituents, whose petition for free trade my Colleague and myself had the honour of lately presenting to the House. Our trade in linen seems on the whole to have been the most flourishing one. From the period ending with 1818 to the present time it has increased in value sixty-two per cent.; since 1828 it has increased in value forty-two per cent.; but, even in this case, the increase of the aggregate value of the exports of the half-manufactured commodity is still more remarkable, than in any other case. The trade in linen yarn has grown up since 1832; in that year the aggregate value of linen yarn exported was only 8,705*l.*; in the next year it was 72,000*l.*; in 1834, 136,000*l.*; in 1835, 216,000*l.*; in 1836, 318,000*l.*; in 1837, 479,000*l.*; and in 1838 it amounted to 655,000*l.*, an increase of about fifty per cent. per annum for the last five years. Almost the whole of this article has been sent to France, and every person is aware, how impossible it is for us to compete with that country in the finer descriptions of the linen manufactures, such, for instance, as cambrics, lawns, &c. These facts, therefore, fully confirm the statements, that I have made with regard to the very great increase, that has taken place on the exports of those commodities which have merely gone through the incipient stages of manufacture, compared with the increase on the exports of those commodities which have reached their final state. These statements are still more fully confirmed by an examination of the quantities of our exports, during the last twenty years; and a comparison of those quantities with their respective values shows, how great a fall has taken place in the prices of almost all the chief productions of our manufacturing industry. Of this fact, I think the following table will convince the House. I must, however, remark, that on account of there being no returns of the quantities of the exports later than 1837, I am obliged to institute my comparison with regard to the four years ending with 1837, instead of taking the four last years:—*

From the period ending with 1818 to that ending with 1837, the increase on the quantity of cotton goods exported has been 147 per cent., whilst on cotton yarn it has been 569 per cent., or four times as great as that of the former. Since 1818 up to the present time the fall in the prices of cotton goods has been fifty-nine per cent.; of cotton yarn, sixty-one per cent. I must observe, however, that these calculations, with regard to the fall in the prices of cotton and other goods, are founded upon the supposition, that the average quality of each description of exports has been nearly the same in the two periods compared; or, at least, that their quality has not deteriorated. From the period ending with 1828 the fall in the prices of cotton goods has been thirty-one per cent.; of cotton yarn fifteen per cent., the increase on the quantity of the exports of the former having been seventy-one per cent., on the latter 105 per cent. The same facts may be observed with regard to hardwares and iron as those which I have just stated with regard to cotton and cotton yarn. The quantity of hardwares exported has increased forty-five per cent., since the period ending with 1818; during that interval, however, the increase of the quantity of iron and steel exported has been more than four times as great, namely, 208 per cent.; in the same time the depreciation in the value of hardwares has been twenty-eight per cent., and of iron, &c., forty-six per cent. Comparing the four last years with the averages of the four years ending with 1828, it appears that the exports of hardwares have increased in quantity fifty-seven per cent., with a fall in prices of eighteen per cent.; and those of iron and steel have increased in quantity 128 per cent. with a fall in prices of twenty-nine per cent. I have already stated, that the value of woollen manufactures exported is less than it was twenty years ago; during that time there has been an increase in the quantity of piece goods exported of no less than forty-five per cent., with a fall in their prices of probably about forty per cent. From the years ending with 1828 to those ending with 1837, the increase on the quantity of the exports of woollen manufactures has been eleven per cent., of woollen yarn 929 per cent., of wool 524 per cent.; during that interval in woollen goods prices have risen three and a half per cent., in woollen yarn they have fallen fourteen per cent., and in wool they have risen sixty-nine per cent. With regard to our linen manufactures, there has been a great increase in the quantity as well as in the value of our exports, with a fall in prices of about eleven per cent. since the period of 1818, and no alteration since that of 1828. I will read to the House an account of the amazing annual increase in the quantity of linen yarn exported since 1832. In that year 100,000lbs. weight was the whole quantity exported; in the next year it increased ninefold; in 1834 it amounted to 1,500,000lbs.; in 1835, to 2,600,000lbs.; in 1836, to 4,500,000lbs; in 1837, to 8,300,000lbs.; and last year it probably exceeded 10,000,000lbs. At the same time there has been a considerable fall in prices to the extent of more than twenty-five per cent. These statistical details, which I have collected with much care and trouble and which I believe to be perfectly correct, prove beyond a doubt the general accuracy of the statements, that I have made with reference to the alterations, that have taken place in the commerce of this country; namely, that the aggregate money value of our exports has increased little or nothing during the last twenty years, certainly not in proportion to the increase of capital and population; likewise, that there has been a great and extraordinary increase in the aggregate value and in the quantity of the exports of those commodities, which have merely undergone the first and preliminary processes, and which are exported to be, as it were, the raw material, on which the foreign workman may exercise his skill, ingenuity, and taste. No less certain is it, that the prices of most manufactured commodities have greatly decreased during the last twenty years. I am not prepared to assert, that these facts are of so alarming a nature as some believe, or that they threaten immediate ruin to our trade and manufac-

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* See Table following page.

	Average of the Years 1815-16-17-18.	Average of the Years 1825-26-27-28.	Average of the Years 1834-35-36-37.	Increase per Cent. on the Averages		Fall in Prices per Cent.	
				from 1818 to 1837.	from 1828 to 1837	from 1818 to 1837.	from 1828 to 1837.
Quantity of Exports of							
Cotton Goods yards	230,223,000	333,084,000	570,565,000	147	71	59	31
Cotton Yarn .. lbs	13,110,000	42,553,000	87,834,000	569	105	61	15
Hardwares .. cwts.	243,820	225,740	354,575	45	57	28	18
Iron and Steel .. tons	60,982	81,930	185,453	208	128	46	29
Woollen Goods .. pieces	1,445,414	1,758,912	1,988,681	45	11	48	rise of 3 6-10
Woollen Goods .. yards	8,770,817	6,505,605	7,436,626	decrease 16	14	....	....
Woollen Yarn .. lbs.	......	225,086	2,316,761	....	929	....	fall 14
Wool .. .. lbs.	.....	550,830	3,377,901	....	514	....	rise 69
Linen Goods .. yards	32,019,000	51,852,000	71,581,000	increase 123	38	11	fall 1-10
Linen Yarn .. lbs.	......	......	4,273,000	......	......	......	......

tures; nor will I take it upon myself to decide, that they are all to be attributed to the single operation of the corn law alone, to the exclusion of every other of those various causes, by which each political economist according to his peculiar doctrine, and each class according to its particular interest, attempts to explain every change that takes place, for good or evil, in the economical state of this country. Other causes, besides restrictions on trade, have probably contributed to the production of the results, which I have just mentioned. For instance, the fall in prices has been accounted for by a supposed appreciation in the value of money; by some persons that appreciation is attributed to the well known measure of the right hon. Baronet the Member for Tamworth; by others to a diminution in the supply of the precious metals from the South American continent. This appreciation in the value of money has been estimated so high as 100 per cent.: and if so, it would account for a fall in prices of fifty per cent., about what has been asserted to have taken place. According to this doctrine, not the value, but the quantities, of our exports should be considered the test of the state of our trade; and our commerce would, therefore, be very flourishing, for it would have increased in a far greater proportion than population. Again, the fall in prices has been said to be the consequence of the great increase in the productive powers of industry, brought about by improvements in machinery, which have enabled the manufacturer to produce the same amount of goods at a much less cost, and, consequently, to sell them much cheaper than formerly. In so far as this cause has operated, its effects must, on the whole, have been beneficial, by economising human labour and increasing the means of human enjoyment. On the other hand, some, I believe, of the petitioners, to whom I have already referred, contend that the decrease in the prices of the different descriptions of commodities exported is to be accounted for by the inferior quality of the goods now exported; an alteration in our trade to be attributed to the fact of our being undersold by foreign competitors in the finer fabrics, which require a greater amount of human labour to be expended upon them. Amongst the other assigned causes for the fall in prices during the last twenty years, may be reckoned the succession of favourable seasons since 1818; the great improvements that have taken place in agriculture, particularly in Ireland; the diminution in the price of the raw material, in consequence of the removal of obstacles from the several sources of foreign supply; the extension of those sources; the discovery of new ones; and the great and increasing facilities in external and internal communications. It is true, that the causes, to which I have just alluded, may account for a portion of the fall in prices, but they do not explain the accompanying fall in profits. That a great and gradual reduction in profits has taken place is, I believe, an undoubted fact. In order, therefore, to support my assertions on this head, I shall content myself with merely referring to the evidence given before the committee on commerce and manufactures, by two gentlemen of the highest authority in all matters of commerce, Mr. Samuel Gurney and Mr. Lewis Lloyd. Both of those gentlemen referred to the low profits of trade at the present time. The former stated, that there existed "severe competition in every direction," and to that competition he attributed the distress of the smaller shopkeepers. Mr. Lewis Lloyd said, "The profits of trade are so small, that, in order to be realized, a man must go to work in the best possible manner; and, if he is to sell at a profit, he must lay in his goods cheaply and well, and to do this he must buy them with ready money." Mr. Lewis Lloyd likewise gave it as his opinion, "That there is an overgrown capital in this country," and "a great superfluity of money," Sir, I contend that the low profits of which these high authorities have spoken, the "severe competition," the "overgrown capital," and the "superfluity of money," to which they have borne witness, can all be clearly traced to the effects of restricted trade, in limiting the field for the productive employment of labour and capital, or, in other words, to the fact, that capital and labour are in excess compared to the means of profitably employing them. This position requires the attentive consideration of the House, as low profits are the source of general uneasiness to all classes, who do not positively live, as the saying is, from hand to mouth, but who possess funds, however small, and the smaller, the greater their suffering from low profits. Therefore, with the permission of the House, I will now make a few observations with regard to the excess of capital compared with the means of profitably employing it, and show how the result is chiefly to be attributed to restricted trade, especially to the Corn-law. The long continuance of peace, with the attendant security of person and property, has caused a vast accumulation of capital. To find profitable employment for capital has been the difficult problem, which every possessor of capital has had to solve. Even under favourable circumstances there is always a disinclination to embark in new fields of speculation, the ignorance with regard to which produces apprehensions, which can only be overcome by the prospect of considerable gain. Consequently capitalists are inclined, in preference, to invest their capital in the well-known fields of production, the certainty with regard to which is held to compensate for the lesser amount of profit. Thus even in the natural course of things, underanged by the operations of the Legislature, capital has a strong tendency to flow into the long-established branches of the industry of a country, and in those branches to augment production, and to produce competition. This competition occasions a fall in prices, and likewise of profits, unless, in proportion to the influx of capital, the demand for the augmented produce is increased by the extension of old, or the opening of new, markets. The operation, however, of restrictions on trade is to add to the uncertainty with regard to the employment of capital in new fields of production; thus to augment the tendency of capital to flow into the old channels of production, and at the same time, unhappily, it prevents both the extension of old markets and the opening of new ones. This is, more or less, the effect of all restrictions on trade, but especially of the Corn-law, as I shall attempt to show, and as briefly as I can. There can be little doubt, if the Corn-law were repealed, that large quantites of British capital would be invested in agriculture abroad, thus opening a new and profitable field of employment for capital. In order to pay for the corn we should receive, more manufactures of the kind we now produce, and probably other descriptions of manufactures, better suited to the tastes of our fresh customers, would be required; thus the home field for the employment of capital and labour would be extended. At the same time we should want larger supplies of the raw materials of those manufactures, for instance, of cotton, wool, &c., in the production and procuring of which other and new means would arise of productively employing our capital. The position cannot be too strongly laid down, that, with our enormous capital, far exceeding that of any nation—perhaps not much less than that of all the civilized nations of the earth together—with inexhaustible means of working up the raw material—with workmen unrivalled in skill—all we want is customers, all we require is markets. Of customers and of markets the Corn-law deprives us. It would have been shown at your bar, had not hon. Gentlemen feared to listen to the language of reason and experience, that the Corn-law has prevented various nations, especially of the north of Europe, from buying as much of our manufactures as they would have done, had they possessed the means of purchase. Their chief means of purchase being food, they have been unable to extend their dealings with us. They have had, therefore, but two alternatives, either to do without the manufactures they required, or to become manufacturers themselves. Notwithstanding the great disadvantages under which they laboured, they have been enabled to adopt the latter alternative, and are beginning to supplant us in their home markets. Notwithstanding, I say, the inferiority in the skill of their workmen, compared with ours, an inferiority, be it remembered, which each day is decreasing; notwithstanding their distance from the raw material and their want of elementary power; yet on account of the low price of labour, they are now able to compete with us in many of those fabrics, for the production of which a large amount of human labour is required; and they can finish up, at a far less cost, and in a far better manner, those half-wrought commodities, of which we export, as I have already shown, so vast and yearly-increasing a quantity. Moreover, though the productive powers of a foreign labourer are much less than those of our labourers, though the quantity that the former can produce in a given time is much less than can be produced by a British workman, yet so small is the wage of labour that the share remaining to the capitalist, which constitutes his profit, is much greater than the rate of profit in this country. By a small reduction in that profit, in the form of a reduction in price, the foreign manufacturers have been able, to a certain extent, to undersell us in many of the neutral or common markets. This foreign competition aggravates the home competition which, I have already stated, exists amongst British manufacturers, reduces prices in those fabrics in which there is foreign rivalry, and thus occasions a further fall in profits. There, however, the effect of competition does not terminate. Profits cannot permanently fall in one trade, and not fall, likewise, in every other trade carried on in the same community, without capital, when it can be done, being withdrawn from the less profitable, and invested in the more profitable, employments. But in the state of things that I am now describing, with every employment overstocked, and with fierce competition from abroad, the withdrawal even of a considerable amount of capital from one branch of industry tends but very slightly to raise prices in that particular branch, from which the capital is withdrawn; because prices depend upon the relation between demand and supply in the markets of the world, and the latter, on account of the great extension of foreign manufactures, no longer mainly consists of the supply from this country. At the same time, the effect of such investments of capital in the trades which are somewhat more profitable, is only to aggravate competition in those trades. The consequence is, an universal fall in prices of all the productions of our industry, accompanied by a fall in profits. That a fall in prices has taken place I have demonstrated beyond a doubt. I have already assigned a variety of causes, to whose complex action, I have no doubt, a portion of that fall may be attributed. It appears to me equally evident, that the remainder of that fall is the result of the competition, to which I have referred. As little can it be denied, that there has been a general fall of profits, a portion of which, I think, is satisfactorily explained by what I have already shown, namely, by the competition arising from the limitation of the field of production, in consequence of restrictions on trade. In addition to all this, I think, that the Corn-law has had some, and certainly will have, if unrepealed a more special influence over profits, in the following manner. In consequence of the necessity of finding subsistence for an increasing population, this country has, on account of the Corn-law, been obliged to produce food on inferior soils, or to have recourse to inferior means of production, so that the productive power of labour in producing food has decreased; and, in consequence, the quantity raised by the labour of an individual is less than it was; therefore, the amount to be divided between the labourer and the agricultural capitalist is less than it was; and supposing, that the wages of the labourer have not decreased, the remaining share of the agricultural capitalist must evidently be less than it was—or, in other words, the profit of the farmer must have decreased, and, according to the law of the equality of profits in all trades, the profits in all other trades must have equally fallen. But I should observe, that in consequence of the great improvements in agriculture, which have of late enabled the farmer to raise a greater quantity of produce than formerly, with the same quantity of labour and capital, on soils of the same degree of fertility, I do not think, that the increased demand for food has occasioned anything like that fall in profits, which, it might be easily demonstrated, it would have done, had those improvements not taken place, and the present system of prohibition been adhered to. It would be useless now to speculate on what would have been the result of a different order of things, were it not a means of deducing conclusions with regard to the future, and of warning us of great and impending evils. It seems to me very improbable, that the improvements in the productive powers of agricultural industry will continue to be such, that in this limited territory the increased quantity of food required for an increasing population will continue to be raised without more than a proportionate increase in the quantity of capital and labour expended on such production; and if this improbable event do not occur, then there must inevitably be a fall of profits, or of wages, or ultimately of both. The latter result I will presently show, is the most probable one, but before I do so, I will make a few observations on the grievous effects of low profits on every class of the community. Low profits occasion general uneasiness. Small capitalists find it difficult, with their utmost exertions, to realize such returns as will enable them to maintain a scanty subsistence. Distress among such persons is intense, and numbers become bankrupts, especially of the small farmers, whole generations of whom have been swept off, and converted into agricultural labourers. It is only the owners of very large capitals who can well maintain themselves on the small profits of their enormous capitals, and the difficulty they find in obtaining profitable investments has induced them to enter into occupations, which belonged exclusively to small capitalists; for instance, into the retail trade, where by the most skilful arrangements, by the most comprehensive, as well as the most minute division of employments, by carefully watching the markets, so as to purchase at a favourable opportunity, and by other means only in the power of the possessors of large capitals, they are able to undersell the small retail dealers, and to dispose of their goods at a price so low as to ruin their competitors who do not enjoy the same advantages. It is this fierce competition, this struggle for profits, however small, which explains a fact, that seems anomalous, namely, the increased investment of capital, and the establishment of fresh machinery and mills in several branches of industry, which, according to high authorities, have ceased to be profitable. When, however, the subject is carefully examined, it will be seen, that the same circumstances are taking place in this case as in that of the retail dealers; that large capitalists are availing themselves of the superiority, which the masses of their capital give them, to effect such small savings, as enable them to undersell their competitors, and, at the same time, to realize a trifling profit. In this manner the doctrine, that the Corn-law, by confining continually increasing capital within a limited field of investment, occasions low profits by means of competition, is supported by facts, which have been adduced as proof, that the Corn-law has no injurious consequences. That doctrine, I say, is supported by the vast and constant increase of manufacturing capital in the shape of mills and machinery. Competition is so great, and profits are so low, just because of the great increase of capital within a limited field of investment, which increase of capital some persons would urge as a proof, that the Corn-law has not retarded the prosperity of the nation. I admit that the Corn-law has not prevented the increase of capital, but I attribute low profits, and all the evils attendant thereon, to restrictions on the means of investing this continually increasing capital. Of these restrictions the first and most mischievous is the Corn-law. This restriction is so injurious, chiefly because the capital is so great. It follows that the pro-Corn-law argument, which is founded on the increase of capital, may be good for nothing, and may even be used as one of the most forcible arguments against a Corn-law on account of its producing "an overgrown capital," "a great superfluity of money," and "severe competition." In making these observations I desire not to be supposed to speak against the principle of competition. I know, that it has bestowed great benefits upon mankind. I am aware, that it produces great evils, especially of a social and moral kind, for which probably no complete remedy will ever be devised, or has ever been imagined, except by some of the wildest of speculators. My object is to point out the extent, to which the evils of competition are unnecessarily aggravated in any particular society by the limitation of the field for the productive employment of labour and capital. I have shown in what manner it injures all classes who live upon the profits of capital; it is equally pernicious to those who are maintained by the interest of stock; for it is evident that the amount of the latter is in proportion to the rate of profits: by a similar mode of reasoning, it would be easy to prove, that from the same cause great and injurious competition exists in every profession and employment. I will now proceed to show how mischievous restrictions on trade are to those who subsist upon the wages of labour. First, by occasioning low profits they deprive the industrious and frugal of the means of profitably investing their scanty earnings. In illustration of this fact, I may remark that, in former times, it was a common thing for servants of various classes, who had saved wages, to embark in some branch of trade, and to succeed as capitalists. This, I believe, is now seldom known, and when attempted, it seldom succeeds. Secondly, the limitation of the field of employment tends to lower both the real and the money wages of labour. The money wages of labour depend upon the relation between the supply of labour and the demand for it; or, in other words, between the number of labourers and the means of profitable employment. If the number of labourers increase in a greater proportion than the means of employing them, money wages fall. Now, I have already shown, that restrictions on trade, by limiting the field of production, diminishes the means of profitably employing labour and capital, and occasions low profits, in consequence of which, capital in this country does not increase as rapidly as it would otherwise do. In addition to this, the hope of finding more lucrative investments, together with the great facilities of communication, is causing a considerable and yearly increasing quantity of capital to be sent abroad. The capital so exported, instead of being expended in the most beneficial manner for this country, for instance, in producing articles of exchange in return for the produce of our home industry, and thus in enlarging the home field of production, is too frequently either squandered in foreign loans or in the wildest speculations, or is invested in producing, with British-made machinery, and under the superintendence of British workmen, those very fabrics with which we could both best and cheapest supply the world, were it not for the restrictions on our trade. In consequence of the operation of these causes, it appears to me certain, that the means of employing labour are prevented from increasing in the same ratio as the supply of labour, and therefore that the money wages of labour are less than they would probably be, if the Corn-laws and other restrictions on trade were repealed. But the most important question for the labourer is not the money value of his wages, but the real value of his wages; or, in other words, the number and nature of the things, that he can buy with his wages. That is the consideration upon which his happiness depends. The labourer may be said to be well off, when, with a moderate degree of labour, he is well fed, well clothed, and well lodged, and there still remains a surplus both of his time and of his earnings to be expended in amusement and recreation. Such, Sir, is not the state of the majority of British labourers. With an immoderate degree of toil they are frequently only able to obtain just food enough to appease their craving appetites, and, in so doing, their whole time and energies are expended. This arises from the high price of food. Open our ports, thus diminish the price of food, and in proportion to the fall in the price of food the real value of the wages of labour will increase, and the labourer will be comparatively well off. Some persons contend, that with a repeal of the Corn-laws there would be a considerable diminution in agricultural employments, in consequence of which many agricultural labourers will become manufacturing labourers. Then, they say, there will be a great increase in the supply of labour to the manufacturers, which will cause a fall in money wages. I must first observe, with regard to this supposition, that unless the fall in wages be greater than the fall in the prices of food, the real wages of the labourer will not be diminished, and he will, at the worst, be the same as he was before. But I am convinced, that there will be no fall in money wages by a repeal of the Corn-law, both by the reasons I have already stated, and likewise because of the increase of employment, which must necessarily arise in consequence of the increase in the exports of our manufactures, that must take place to pay for the food we should import. What will be the effect of a repeal of the Corn-law upon the landlords? I believe that with free trade such an impulse would be given to the productive energies of our manufacturing industry, that both capital and population would very rapidly increase; that there must arise a great increase in the demand for the products of land; that in consequence of such a demand the value of all lands in the vicinity of towns, or of thriving villages about to become towns, would greatly increase; so likewise would be the case with pasturage and many other descriptions of land, in consequence of the increased consumption of animal food, and of other kinds of agricultural produce, that could not be imported from a distance. The possessors of such lands evidently would be benefited by a repeal of the Corn-law. Though I am convinced, that in a short period of time, for the reasons I have just assigned, new and profitable employments would be found for all descriptions of British land, yet some persons may assert, that there are certain lands on which corn only can be reared, and that the possessors of those lands would be permanently injured by a considerable reduction in the price of corn. I do not, by any means, deny that this may be the case; but I must remark that, unfortunately, even the best alterations cannot be effected without some injury to individuals —an injury which we may deplore, but ought not to hesitate to inflict when the interest of the public demands it. What, it may be asked, will be the positive reduction in the price of corn in consequence of free trade? On comparing the averages of the last five years with the price of corn on the Continent, taking into consideration the difference in the qualities of corn, the expense of carriage, insurance, &c., the loss on the voyage by heating, and other causes, the probable rise of price in consequence of any considerable demand from this country on account of the difficulty of extending foreign agriculture in its present imperfect state, I am compelled, though reluctantly, to come to the conclusion that the fall in the price of corn, which would be the consequence of free trade, would be far less than many persons imagine, and that a very inconsiderable fixed duty would, in most cases, amount to a prohibition. There is another reason which leads me to believe, that a repeal of the Corn-law would not be as injurious to the landlords as many think it would be. It is this—that in every trade which has been opened to foreign competition, that competition has stimulated invention, caused the introduction of new and more perfect modes of production, and given rise to discoveries, by which the home producer has been enabled to compete successfully with his foreign rival. It appears to me by no means a chimerical supposition, that similar results would, in some degree, follow the opening of our ports to foreign corn. For, when I consider the difference in the state of agriculture in various parts of this country, how much superior in skill and knowledge are the farmers of Scotland over those of most of the counties in England—[*"No, no!"*]—I would refer those hon. Gentlemen, who have so loudly contradicted me, to the evidence taken before the agricultural committee, of which the noble Lord opposite (Darlington) was undoubtedly a distinguished member, there they will find the clearest evidence of the just superiority of the Scotch over the English farmer; and be convinced, that if any cause, such as a repeal of the Corn-law, were to stimulate the now inert agricultural population, and to compel them to adopt those improvements in the cultivation of the soil to which I have referred, a much larger portion of food might be raised at much less cost than at present. The social consequences of unrestricted trade, seem to me of even greater importance than its economical benefits. I have assigned my reasons for supposing, that the aggregate wealth of this country is by no means so great as it would be with free trade. This, indeed, seems to me a self-evident proposition, for a country is rich or poor in proportion as it possesses a greater or less amount of those means of human enjoyment, which constitute wealth. The only modes, by which a large community can acquire wealth, are either directly from its own territory, or indirectly by exchanging its productions for those of other countries. Therefore, the wealth of a nation is in proportion to its productive powers and to its facilities of exchange. If these positions be allowed, and it be the avowed object of Government to contribute to the material wealth of the State, it is difficult to conceive upon what plea impediments to commerce can be justified. I am, however, far from believing, that the happiness of a community depends entirely or even chiefly upon its aggregate wealth; on the contrary, I am firmly convinced, that it depends much more on the mode, in which wealth is distributed amongst its members. For a community may possess an enormous amount of wealth, yet the great majority of its citizens may be most unhappy; and this will happen, when all that wealth is accumulated in a few hands, for whom the rest of the people are compelled to toil in squalid misery and wretchedness. On the other hand, the wealth of a community may be much less in amount, but, being nearly equally distributed amongst its members, there will be no persons possessing very large fortunes, but all in a state of nearly equal comfort. This is the social state a really good Government would desire—this result is to be obtained, not by any positive laws, but by abstaining from making such laws as tend to produce inequality in fortunes. Inequality there always will be, arising from the difference in the intellect and character of individuals, an equality stamped upon them by the Author of Nature. But it behoves the Legislature carefully to abstain from augmenting that natural inequality by means of positive laws. Now, consider what, in this respect, is the effect of the Corn-law. It gives to the possessors of the soil a larger share of the wealth of this community than is naturally due to them—it gives to them a monopoly of that article which the rest of the community must purchase, whatever be its price. The owner of British land has enormous advantages over the foreign producer; first, he resides in the immediate vicinity of the best markets in the world, those of this densely-peopled country—a consideration of the utmost importance with regard to so bulky a commodity as food; secondly, he can obtain at a low rate of interest any amount of capital for the purpose of improving his land and cultivating it in the best possible manner; and, lastly, his productions are of a kind, for which there is and ever will be a steady and pressing demand, for nothing is more absurd than to suppose that any very considerable portion of the food of this country can be imported. Not content with these natural advantages, which must at all times make the landowners the most powerful class, they have availed themselves of political power in order to grasp an undue share of the wealth of the country. For whom do our manufacturers toil early and late? for whom do they compel their unfortunate children to work even in their tenderest years—for whom do our merchants cover the seas with their fleets—for whom do they collect from every portion of the globe the luxuries of every clime? For the owners of the soil—for those who, possessing the monopoly of food, can and do compel all others to minister to their wants. This it is, that causes this country so frequently to offer the spectacle of the two extremes—of splendid wealth, and abject misery; a contrast inconsistent with any considerable degree of social well-being. I will not trespass upon the patience of the House by tracing the moral consequences of this great social inequality, of the general uneasiness, of the severe competition, of the low wages, low profits, and other mischievous consequences of restricted trade; nor will I refer to the antipathies and jealousies thence arising, pervading every class in the community, estranging them from one another, and causing mutual hatred and distrust; as is especially the case between the employers of labour and the employed; the former striving, in vain, to augment their profits at the expense of their labourers, and the latter endeavouring, with equal ill success, to increase their insufficient wages from the profits of their masters. Sir, I will now conclude with observing, that I desire a removal of all restrictions on freedom of exchange; because thereby, in my humble judgment, new and more extensive markets would be opened to our commerce, the means of productive employment would be increased, our sources of enjoyment augmented, and a vast addition made to the wealth of this country. At the same time, there would gradually be brought about a more equal distribution of wealth, and a greater equality in the condition of our population; and equality, I firmly believe, is the first and most important element of social happiness, and without it a community can never be really prosperous or well governed. I desire free trade for the sake, especially, of the poorer classes—for the sake of those who subsist on the wages of labour, whose well-being should be the first care of a provident Government. I desire it for their sakes, in order that they may earn more with less labour, that they may enjoy greater comforts, and be able to devote a portion of the time, now spent in unremitting toil, to self-culture and to the elevation of themselves in the scale of humanity. I desire free trade for the sake, likewise, of the employers of labour, as being the only means of allaying the hostile spirit, unfortunately existing between them and their labourers, which arises out of the long-continued but unavailing struggle between wages and profits. I desire it for the sake of those, who live upon the profits of capital or upon the interest of stock, or who belong to any trade, profession, or employment, all of whom are injuriously affected by the severity of the home competition, produced by the limitation of the field of employment. And, lastly, I desire the abandonment of all commercial restrictions for the sake even of the landlords, in order that they may no longer be held up to public indignation as the spoilers of the community—as men whose ignorant and selfish prejudices, combined with their unjustly-acquired power, are the chief impediments to the rapid advance of this country in material wealth and social improvement. My reasons, therefore, for desiring an immediate and total repeal of the Corn-law are, in addition to its intrinsic advantages, that such an alteration in our commercial system would almost instantaneously be followed by a removal of all other restrictions on trade; and so powerful would be the moral effect on public opinion throughout the world, if this, the wealthiest, the most commercial and manufacturing country on the earth, were to open its ports and to declare itself in favour of free trade, that I am persuaded, that few civilised nations would be able long to abstain from imitating the example of England. Then, by the gradual operation of those laws of human nature, in virtue of which men desire to buy at the cheapest and to sell at the dearest market, each nation would take to itself that share in the general production, for which it is best adapted by the nature of its soil and the genius of its inhabitants. Civilised nations, instead of being separated, as now, by commercial restrictions, would form one vast social system, cemented together by similar wants, by interests closely interwoven, and by mutual dependence upon one another. The extended intercourse thence arising, facilitated by daily improvements in the means of conveyance, would soon obliterate those noxious jealousies and hateful national antipathies, the fertile sources of wars and their attendant evils, to which may mainly be attributed the slow moral and social improvement of mankind. And now let me humbly beseech the House to ponder well over these great social and economical advantages of unrestricted commercial intercourse, and let me earnestly implore this Assembly to prove on the present occasion that it represents the Commons of England, by not permitting itself to be led away by the interest-begotten prejudices of a class, however powerful, and however respectable.

Mr. *Christopher* hoped he should receive the indulgence of the House while he stated as briefly as possible the reasons which induced him to oppose the motion of the hon. Member for Wolverhampton. He could assure the House if it were not from the circumstance of his being the Representative of a very large agricultural constituency, and of his feeling very strongly the injustice and impolicy of the hon. Member's proposal, he would not, suffering as he was from a severe cold, attempt to offer himself to the notice of the House. He rejoiced that the hon. Member had at last brought this question fully and fairly under the consideration of the House, and although the hon. Gentleman had framed his motion with a view to secure the votes of hon. Members who held conflicting opinions on the subject of Corn-laws, yet he did not complain of the hon. Gentleman for taking that course; because, after the division which would take place upon his motion, the question would be decided, not as to whether the House was in favour of a total repeal of the Corn-laws, or whether it was in favour of a fixed duty in preference to the present graduated scale, but whether the House of Commons was prepared to sanction any alteration at all in those laws. It was because he was opposed to any alteration whatever in the present system, because he considered that that system had been conducive to the benefit of the community at large more than any other measure he had yet heard proposed, either in or out of that House, and believing as he did, that it afforded in time of scarcity a fair protection to the consumer, and in time of plenty a remunerating price to the farmer, that he resisted the motion of the hon. Member for Wolverhampton. He had said that he did not complain of the course taken by the hon. Member; but he did complain, and he thought the agriculturists throughout the country would complain of the conduct Her Majesty's Ministers had pursued in reference to this subject. They had heard only a short time ago from the organ of the Government in that House, the noble Lord the Secretary of State for the Home Department, that ever since the formation of Lord Grey's Government the Corn-law question had been an open question in the Cabinet. Now during the last eight years, since the formation of Lord Grey's Administration, this was the first time he had heard a declaration of the kind made to Parliament; and he must confess that it appeared to him rather extraordinary that two other noble Lords who had been members of that Administration were quite of a different opinion. One of those noble Lords, whose mind must have been particularly alive to the consideration of this question, having for a long time held the office of President of the Board of Trade, and who, he believed, had been instrumental in introducing into that House the Corn-law of 1815—he meant the Earl of Ripon—had publicly declared that he did not understand that the Cabinet of Earl Grey had been formed on any such principle. Another noble Lord (Lord Brougham), who entertained very different views upon the subject, whose object always had been to modify or repeal the Corn-laws, had likewise declared that during Lord Grey's Administration their mouths were sealed upon the question. He could not avoid saying, therefore, that the conduct of the Government in reference to a measure of such great importance, and which, it was admitted on all sides of the House, materially affected the well-being of the country, was highly censurable. An attempt had been generally made by the advocates of a repeal of the Corn-laws to enlist upon their side the suffering portion of the working classes, by drawing an analogy between their situation and that of the hand-loom weavers. Now, he was prepared to show, if the Corn-laws were repealed to-morrow, the state of the agricultural labourer would bear no resemblance or analogy to that of the handloom weaver. The handloom weaver became distressed, not from the withdrawal of protection from manufacturers, because that protection was the same now as it was when they were in full employment, but from the application of machinery to manufactures instead of manual labour, by which many persons were thrown out of employment, and by which means, also, the master manufacturers were enabled to realize from 20 to 120 per cent. on their capital. If they were to apply the same principle to agriculture, and if they were by some means to enable the farmer to grow twelve quarters of wheat on land which ordinarily produced only three quarters, and to employ twenty labourers instead of one, and if they enabled him to realize from 12 to 20 per cent. on his capital, instead of from 3 to 4, then might their argument and analogy be good and sufficient to justify a demand for a modification or repeal of the Corn-laws. He was prepared to show also that the protection afforded to agriculture, under the very low rate of profit with which agriculturists were satisfied, was nothing more than the protection which was afforded to manufacturers. The right hon. Gentleman, the President of the Board of Trade, had said last night, that if they would only go into Committee, he would propose a measure to enable the consumer of this country to have corn at a lower and more regular price. The right hon. Gentleman also endeavoured to form an analogy between the state of agriculture and manufactures, and though he did not propose any plan to the House, he said that he had a plan which would enable them to regulate the price of grain in the same manner as they regulated the price of manufactures. But, give him leave to say, that the agriculturist had much greater difficulties to contend against than the manufacturer. The manufacturer could at all times limit the supply to the demand in the markets, while the agriculturist was obliged to depend upon the chances of the season. In that respect it was impossible he could compete with the manufacturer. He was, besides, always obliged to cultivate his land to the greatest possible advantage, in order to produce the greater quantity of grain. In 1815 Mr. Huskisson said, in reply to Mr. Baring on this question, "If this was an untaxed country; if we had no poor-rates; if a perfect freedom of trade existed in every branch of commerce, the arguments of the hon. Gentleman would be irresistible." And in 1825, on Mr. Whitmore's motion, Mr. Huskisson expressed himself in the following terms:—"But it was said, that to withdraw our protection from the manufacturers of the country, and to continue it to the growers of corn, was acting upon an erroneous system. He denied this position entirely, and contended that reasoning from analogy in a case like the present must necessarily lead to an erroneous conclusion. In the first place, we could manufacture cheaper than every other country; but every other country could grow corn cheaper than we could. In the next, we exported to the amount of thirty millions of cottons annually, and not thirty bushels of corn. Then there was no accumulation of cottons on the continent, but there was an accumulation of corn. When there was an accumulation of cotton, the manufacturer could contract his supply; but could a similar measure be adopted by the agriculturist, when there was an accumulation of corn? Beside these considerations there were several others applying to agriculture, and not to manufactures, which were sufficient to convince any impartial man that the argument founded upon this analogy was anything but logical."* Now, although the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade seemed inclined to dispute the position that the agriculturist had much greater burdens to bear than the manufacturer, he, without at all refering to the antiquated argument of the malt-tax, maintained that such was the fact. The agriculturist in very many cases, and nowhere more so than in the county he had the honour to represent, was obliged to pay a very large amount of local taxation to keep his land in cultivation, and was, besides, heavily taxed, having to pay a larger share of the poor-rate than the manufacturer, and also the highway and county-rates. He would take the poor-rate in 1833, the time at which it was highest, to show in what comparative degree it was contributed to by the agriculturist and the manufacturer in England and Wales. Taking into consideration the amount of the population respectively concerned in each, he found that in that year the poor-rate in England and Wales amounted to 8,606,501*l.*; the number of families employed in agriculture to 834,000; the number of families employed in trade and manufactures, 1,226,000; and the remaining number of families employed in all the other occupations to 848,000. Now, out of the 8,606,501*l.* of poor-rate, he found that the land alone had contributed no less than 5,434,895*l.*; that the manorial profits contributed 183,874*l.*; dwelling-houses 2,635,257*l.*; and mills and factories only 352,479*l.* So that upon adding the mills, factories, and dwelling-houses together, it appeared that the amount they contributed to the poor-rate was only somewhere about 2,980,000*l.*, while that paid by the land was 5,600,000*l.*, or thereabouts. He should now proceed to take another view of this question. He should admit, for the sake of argument, that the hon. Member for Wolverhampton had been borne out by facts in the course of his statements, and that his deductions from those facts were perfectly sound and tenable. He would admit with him, and with other hon. Members, that our manufactures were in a declining state. Assuming that condition of things to exist, he begged to know in what manner that evil would be remedied by a repeal of the Corn-laws. Could the mere decline of manufactures, of itself, and without reference to other circumstances, warrant the conclusion that the Corn-laws ought to be repealed? Surely there could be no sound legislation in coming to such a conclusion without first referring our whole commercial, manufacturing, and agricultural condition to a Committee, and considering maturely the expediency and practicability of taking all restrictions off trade. It had been said, and as often as it was said, it had been admitted, that a repeal of the Corn-laws must produce the effect of throwing a certain quantity of poor land out of cultivation. He need hardly suggest, that a consequence of that would be greatly to depress the agricultural interest; and on whom then could the manufacturer depend for his home trade? Before any Member of that House got up in his place to propose a repeal of the Corn-laws, he ought first to move for a Committee to review our whole system of taxation. If the poor lands were thrown out of cultivation, it was evident that the manufacturers' home market must, in a great measure, cease; for if the working classes were put upon coarser food, they would be compelled to content themselves with inferior clothing, and he would call upon the chairman of the Chamber of Commerce at Manchester to say what would be the probable effect of such a change upon the fine goods manufactured in the town with which that hon.G entleman was so intimately connected; what also would be its effects upon English cotton hosiery? He would now briefly allude to a remark which fell from the hon. Member for the West Riding of Yorkshire, in reference to the landlords of England. He conceived that the notice which that hon. Member took of the landlords, conveyed upon them a reflection which they did not deserve. The description which the hon. Member gave of the landlords of England might apply to himself, and perhaps to some of his friends, but he must say, it did not apply to the landlords of England generally, and especially he would say, that it did not apply to the county with which he was connected. He did not know a tenant throughout the country who would not reject such accusations with indignation and scorn. A great deal had been done to show that this question was a landlord's question; and that the farmer and the labourer were in no degree affected by it. He did not deny that it was a landlord's question to a certain extent; but that it was purely so, he altogether dissented from any such assertion. It was a landlord's question, and an occupier's question, and a labourer's question combined; but it affected more materially the smaller holders of land, and the persons employed by them, than it did either the large holders or the landlords. From experience he was convinced, that the lower the individual was reduced in the scale of wealth employed in the cultivation of the soil, the more intense would be his suffering, if anything were done towards repealing the Corn-laws; and of all classes connected with the land he believed that of the labourer would then be the most deplorable. He did not wish to argue the question on the grounds of exclusive support to one national interest over another, but if it came to a decision on these grounds, he should not hesitate to say, that he would be very unwilling indeed to exchange the manly habits of the bold, healthy, and independent peasantry of England for those of the wretched, filthy, and squalid inhabitants of the great manufacturing districts. But that the question was more a tenant's question than a landlord's question, he should be able to show by calculations, and he confidently asserted from personal knowledge, that the condition of the agricultural poor under the present system of management in this country, in the best cultivated districts, was infinitely better than under the most improved system in Scotland. The capital expended on the cultivation of the soil bore a very large proportion to the amount of rent paid by the tenant. Indeed, the rent, in most cases, was very much less in proportion than a fair calculation would fix it. But he would read a calculation made from the results of his own experience:—

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* Hansard, New Series, Vol. xiii., p. 285, 286.

"The following statement shows the probable profit upon a farm of ordinary land, upon the four-field system of husbandry, exclusive of the profits of live stock—a system most commonly used in the Lincolnshire wolds. The expenses are deduced from certain and correct data, and the produce is calculated from the very best practical experience. Wheat is taken at three quarters per acre, price 56*s.* per quarter. The price is what the grower has made the last ten years. The average, as taken by Government, is about 60*s.* Barley is estimated at four quarters four bushels per acre, price 30*s.* Turnips, net value, or what they would sell for, 50*s.* Seeds, or clover, the same. Oats might be sown instead of barley, but it would not alter the account. There is no calculation for straw, as it is an ascertained fact, that the cattle requried to convert it into manure leave no profit; and by the same rule there is no charge for manure, only the leading from the fold-yard to the fallows, where it is required. There is a charge for bones in the turnip-crop, also for earth-ashes, as some artificial manure is requisite to keep the land in condition. Lime is sometimes used, and chalk, and marl, but any of these would cost about the same sum. The average distance of land from market is considered, and in this calculation, about seven miles:—

Expense of producing, and value of produce, upon four acres of arable land upon the four-field system.

TURNIPS	£.	s.	d.
Ploughing four times, 7*s.* per acre	1	8	0
Harrowing, do. 9*d.*	0	3	0
Bones, twelve bushels, 2*s.* 7½*d.* per bushel	1	11	6
Leading same, seven miles	0	2	6
Ashes, burning, riddling, &c.	0	5	0
Seed, 3lb. at 8*d.* per lb.	0	2	0
Drilling	0	2	9
Manure, leading, five loads	0	7	6
Hoeing	0	4	6
Rent	1	1	0
Tithe	0	5	0
Poor, church, highways	0	4	0
Repairs, insurance, fences, draining, gates, tenting, moleing, interest, &c.	0	8	0
Total expense	6	4	9
Net value of crop	2	10	0

CLOVER.	£.	s.	d.
Seed, clover, 14lb. 8*s.* per stone	0	8	0
Ray and other grasses	0	3	0
Sowing	0	0	3
Rolling and harrowing	0	1	3
Rent	1	1	0
Tithe	0	5	0
Parochial rates	0	4	0
Repairs, insurance, fences, gates, draining, tenting, moleing, interest, &c.	0	8	0
Total expense	2	10	6
Net value of clover	2	10	0

BARLEY.	£.	s.	d.
Ploughing once	0	8	0
Harrowing three times, 9*d.*	0	2	3
Seed, four bushels, 3*s.* 9*d.* per bushel	0	15	0
Drilling	0	2	6
Weeding	0	1	0
Cutting or reaping	0	6	0
Carting and stacking	0	5	0
Thatching	0	1	0
Thrashing 4 qrs. 42 b. at 1*s.* 6*d.* per quarter	0	6	9
Dressing do. at 8*d.*	0	3	0
Delivering do. at 1*s.* 4*d.*	0	6	0
Rent	1	1	0
Tithe	0	8	0
Parochial rates	0	4	0
Repairs, insurance, fences, gates, draining, tenting, moleing, interest, &c.	0	8	0
Total expense	4	17	6
Four qrs. four bushels barley, at 30*s.* per quarter	6	15	0

WHEAT.	£.	s.	d.
Ploughing once	0	8	0
Harrowing four times, at 9*d.*	0	3	0
Seed, three bushels, at 7*s.*	1	1	0
Drilling	0	2	0
Rolling	0	0	6
Weeding	0	0	6
Cutting and reaping	0	7	0
Carting and stacking	0	5	0
Thatching	0	1	0
Thrashing three qrs. at 3*s.* per qr.	0	9	0
Dressing do., at 8*d.*	0	2	0
Delivering do., at 1*s.* 6*d.* per qr.	0	4	6
Rent	1	1	0
Tithe	0	10	0
Parochial rates	0	4	0
Repairs, insurance, fences, gates, draining, tenting, moleing, interest, &c.	0	8	0
Total expense	5	7	3
Three qrs. wheat, at 56*s.* per qr.	8	8	0

EXPENSES,	£.	s.	d.		
Turnip crop	6	4	9	£19 0*s.* 0*d.* upon 4 acres, £4. 15*s.* per acre	£0 5*s.* 9*d.* profit per acre.
Barley	4	17	6		
Seeds	2	10	6		
Wheat	5	7	3		
VALUE OF PRODUCE.					
Turnips	2	10	0	£20 3*s.* 8*d.* upon 4 acres, £5 0*s.* 9*d.* per acre	
Barley	6	15	0		
Seeds	2	10	0		
Wheat	8	8	0		

The profit appears to be about 5*s.* 9*d.* per acre for the agriculturist to support himself and family with, and to pay him for his enterprise and capital (except five per cent. charged in the sundry expenses), so that a man farming one hundred acres, has an income from his farm of only 28*l.* 15*s.* to live on if he depended on the tillage of his farm alone. The inference to be drawn from this result is, that, to give fair remuneration to the farmer, wheat should make more than 56*s*. per quarter, barley more than 30*s*. per quarter, and oats more than 21*s*. per quarter, otherwise he must be a loser, and waste his capital. Very productive seasons would be exceptions. There are other systems of management, but it is questionable (except, perhaps, upon the very best lands) whether any better can be adopted, as it is well known that upon ordinary land, when white crops are taken oftener than alternate years, they often fail, unless the land is supported by an equivalent outlay in artificial manures."

Other hon. Gentlemen were of opinion, that if a certain quantity of poor land went out of cultivation, the landlord might lose by it, but that the commercial interests would have the advantage arising from that loss by the diminished price of butcher's meat; but no doctrine could be more unsound, for the succession of crops which the present system of tillage created, would then be lost for the use of sheep and cattle; for, let the system be changed, and there would cease to be the supply of turnips and clover which now existed. No such increase of grass lands as could reasonably be expected would anything like make up the deficiency. He believed, that so far from butcher's meat being at all lowered in price by the repeal of the Corn-laws, it would rather be raised. He entertained the strongest possible conviction, that, without the present system of tillage, it would be impracticable to maintain anything approaching to the present amount of live stock. In the county which he had the honour to represent, there were 2,700,000 sheep fed annually, a very small portion of which ever had natural pasture, and without clover and turnips, he professed himself unable to understand how they could be maintained. Unless they had barley and wheat, they could not have clover and turnips in the quantities now grown upon those grounds; therefore, he contended, that to deprive the agriculturist of a proper protection, so far from lowering, would enhance the prices of butcher's meat. To repeal the Corn-laws would be to make England dependent on the Continent not only for corn, but for butcher's meat likewise. One of the most important considerations connected with this subject was the difficulty of finding employment for those agricultural labourers who would be thrown out of work by an alteration in the Corn-laws. Did any one suppose that persons accustomed to the pure air and healthful occupations of the country could be transferred to crowded cities?—sent, during the night, into the wretched dwellings of the poor ? — confined in heated manufactories for fourteen hours of the day?—exposed to the evil example too freequently to be met with in dense populations?—did any one suppose that all this could take place without a material deterioration of the national character, and even without great and immediate injury to the manufacturing classes themselves, whose labour-market would then of necessity be overstocked? He was aware that some hon. Members would meet this by saying, let us have emigration on an extended scale; but what right had they to make arrangements with the full knowledge that their immediate and certain effect must be to drive the agricultural labourer from his native country? By their Reform Act they had secured Representatives in that House to the manufacturers, the commercial classes, the landlords, the yeomanry; but they had provided no direct representation for the agricultural labourer; he had no direct voice in returning Members to that House. Did not that circumstance of itself impose upon a generous House of Commons the especial duty of attending to the interests of so large a portion of their fellow-subjects? The attachment of this class of Englishmen to the soil was as strong as that of any other, and there was no imaginable reason why their feelings should be disregarded. Their patriotism was as warm, and their rights as indisputable, and their character as unsullied as those of any class of the community. Serving in the army and in the navy, they had frequently repelled invaders from our shores, and bore the standard of England in triumph through many a well-fought field—were those the men whose rights and feelings the House of Commons proposed to disregard. The advocates of abolition looked not to the interests of the great body of the community, but to the advantage of a class; instead of legislating upon a sound and extended basis, they proceeded upon sordid and selfish views. If they were to have a free trade in corn, let them also have a free trade in manufactured goods. If the Corn-laws were repealed, there ought to be an end to restrictive duties. He should be glad to hear what the President of the Board of Trade or the Chancellor of the Exchequer would say to any proposition of that nature. If they repealed the Corn-laws, they must alter the whole financial policy of the Chancellor of the Exchequer. But how could that be done? If it were, they could not keep faith with the public creditor, for they then must knock down every custom-house and every excise-office throughout the country. He believed that the hon. Member for Kilkenny was the only Member of Parliament who would contend that our establishments were too large in the present state of foreign and domestic relations; and if a reduction of our establishments could not be made to such an extent as would enable the Chancellor of the Exchequer to keep faith with the public creditor, his right hon. Friend would be compelled to resort to a property tax as his only alternative. He was of opinion that, in that case, the mill-owners of Nottingham, and Manchester, and Leeds, would be the first to complain of that inquisitorial system of taxation which would expose their pockets to the invasion of his right hon. Friend. There was only one other view of this question which he would place before the House, and that related to the danger to which the population of this country would be exposed, if they were left dependent upon foreign nations for their supply of food. Hon. Gentlemen in arguing against that danger might, perhaps, avail themselves of the argument which had been urged in refutation of it by the Manchester Chamber of Commerce. They might say, that if the Corn-laws were repealed, the interests of all nations would be so united and identified as to secure almost for ever the relations of peace and amity with each other. He was most desirous of seeing such a consummation, but he thought that it would be a most dangerous thing for the population of this country to rely for its supply of food on the peace and friendship of our commercial and political rivals. What had been the effect of the present rise in the price of corn even in these piping times of peace? About three months ago the price of corn rose in this country to 85*s.* a quarter. Now you could buy it at home for 71*s.*, and import it on payment of a duty of 1*s.* a-quarter. Some persons thought that it would be a good speculation to import corn from France, and had in consequence sent to Rochefort to purchase corn. Even in time of peace the excitement of the French population on hearing of these purchases, was so great, that the King of the French had been obliged to issue an ordinance prohibiting the exportation of corn. If the purchase of corn by British merchants in a foreign port produced such an effect in time of peace, what would it not produce in a time of war? Our best security for peace was, to be prepared for war; but if the Corn-laws were repealed, foreign nations might insult our flag with greater impunity than at present, and might adopt whatever measures they pleased to check the progress of freedom either in their own or in other countries. They would then have a cheap means of carrying on a system of warfare against us. They would not have occasion to raise armies or to send fleets against us—they would only have to close their ports—a measure which would carry famine and disease into the heart of our population, and which would compel us, in consequence, to comply with any demands which they might think proper to exact. Then would it be said hereafter—

> "Finem anima——
> Non gladii non saxa dabunt nec tela."

They would only, he repeated, have to close their ports to force us into compliance with their terms, however unjust they might be, or however injurious to our interests. The right hon. President of the Board of Trade had last night complained of the fluctuating prices of corn in this country under the present system of Corn-laws. It was only that morning that he had found on his table a return made to her Majesty's Government by Dr. Bowring respecting the price of grain in the Italian States. He there found it laid down as an undeniable position, that one reason of the present flourishing state of Tuscany was, that it enjoyed a free trade in corn. Now, looking at the average price of corn for the last ten years at Leghorn, where the corn trade existed in all its freedom, he found that the fluctuations in it were nearly as great as those which had taken place in this kingdom. For instance, the price of wheat at Leghorn in 1826 was 28*s.* a-quarter; in 1827 it was 39*s.* a-quarter. That was a considerable rise. In 1828, it was 2*l.* 1*s.* 10*d.* a-quarter. That was another rise. In 1829, it was 2*l.* 6*s.* 3*d.* a-quarter. That was another considerable rise. In 1830, it was 1*l.* 18*s.* 4*d.* a-quarter. In 1831, it was 2*l.* 4*s.* a-quarter. In 1832, it was 2*l.* 1*s.* a-quarter, and so on. From this return it appeared that the highest price of wheat at Leghorn in the last ten years was 2*l.* 6*s.* 3*d.* a-quarter, and that the lowest price was 1*l.* 8*s.* a-quarter. Now, these facts showed that if the repeal of the Corn-laws was to be advocated on the ground that it would render prices steady, the ground for the repeal was completely cut away from the advocates of it. He had to thank the House for the patience with which it had listened to his statements, and, in conclusion, he must declare that he should resist the motion for going into Committee on the ground that such a proceeding would be detrimental to all classes of the community, whether they were engaged in manufactures, in commerce, or in agriculture.

Mr. *Grote* addressed the House as follows:—The hon. Gentleman who has just sat down has talked in emphatic language of the sordid and selfish feelings embodied in the Motion for repealing the Corn-laws. Considering that he is defending a law which, whatever be its other merits, has at least two effects, that of taxing every man in the community in the consumption of his daily bread, and of putting high rents into the pockets of the landlords, I must say, that it is not from the hon. Member's side of the House that imputations of sordid and selfish feelings ought to emanate. Both the hon. Member for Lincolnshire, and those Gentlemen who have preceded him on his side of the question, seem to me to have been remarkably sparing in their explanations of the benefits which have been actually derived from the Corn-laws. He tells us that the Corn-laws have protected the grower against low prices, and the consumer against high prices. How is this consistent with the fact? A few weeks ago the price of wheat was 85*s.* per quarter. Does the hon. Member deny that this is a high price? In 1835 the price of wheat was 36*s.* per quarter. Does he deny that this was a low price? Is it then true, that the existing law protects the grower against low prices, while it at the same time gives the consumer a protection against excessively high prices? I agree with the hon. Gentleman, that this is a question of very serious importance. But important as it appears to me at all times, I must confess that it never seems to me so awfully momentous as when I have been listening to a speech delivered by an advocate of the agricultural interest. If I could admit the fidelity of the picture which the agriculturists commonly draw—if I could acquiesce in the statement which they present to us of the effects of the present Corn-laws, as contrasted with those of a free trade in corn—if I could admit the basis of fact upon which they reason, I should regard the matter in dispute as involving not merely serious loss and obstruction to our prosperity, but even as pregnant with danger to the future repose and tranquillity of the country. For what is the case as the hon. Member for Yorkshire and agriculturists state it? He tells us that under a system of free trade we should be inundated with cheap corn, which could be procured from the Continent at something like one-half of the price at which it is grown in England. He tells us that under a free trade in corn, a very large proportion of the land in these islands would be thrown out of cultivation, and a very large proportion of the farmers who cultivate it would be utterly ruined. He contends that the farmer is only guarded from entire impoverishment and destruction by a system of restrictive laws, which causes every man in the country to pay twice as much for his daily bread as it could be procured for from the Continent. Assume this state of the facts to be correct, and every tittle of it is constantly either asserted or implied in the speeches of advocates of the Corn-laws—assume it to be correct, and I maintain that a more fearful and perilous position of affairs can hardly be imagined. It appears that we are condemned to the melancholy alternative of choosing between the ruin of the British farmer and landowner on one side, and the imposition of a tax of about one hundred per cent. on the nourishment of every labouring man in the community on the other. If this be really the state of the case, and if there be in truth the alleged collision of interests to this extent between the farmers and the remaining community, it is impossible not to believe that awful calamities are in store for the country. For no reasonable man can imagine that the great mass of the community will submit for any length of time to a tax of such vast amount as that which is implied in the statements of the agriculturists themselves, equal to a duplication of the price of their nourishment, for the purpose of eating homegrown wheat in preference to foreign wheat. If the agriculturists are right in asserting that all the capital which is now invested, and which is constantly in course of being invested in the cultivation of the land, is only preserved from loss and destruction by the factitious prices kept up by the Corn-laws, I say that they are upholding a system which cannot end in anything but ruin, and which will only end in greater and more widely-spread ruin the longer it is persisted in. The very arguments which the agriculturists employ as points of attraction to the farmer are, in reality, points of intolerable repulsion towards every other member of the community. And if I could admit in their full extent the premises of the Corn-law advocates, I should draw from those premises the very opposite conclusion—I should be driven to the conviction that the principle of the Corn-laws was full of nothing but peril and uncertainty for the present, and prospective ruin for the future—I should regard it as a matter of imperative necessity to desist from encouraging the investment of additional farming capital under such hazardous contingencies, and to seek forthwith the safest means of abandoning an ill-chosen and calamitous policy. Even on the showing of the agriculturists themselves, the rational conclusion seems to me to follow, that the Corn-laws are alike unjust in principle and untenable in practice, and that the difficulty, whatever it be, attending their repeal will be only aggravated by postponing the moment of abandoning them, inasmuch as our population is increasing, and more capital is daily and yearly invested in land. But I do not admit the accuracy of the case as it is set forth by the advocates of the Corn-laws. I do not agree with them in their statement of the degree to which the price of wheat would be lowered by free-trade, and of the extent to which British agriculture would be ruined. As I do not estimate so highly as they do the fall in the price of wheat, so neither do I rate so highly the correlative and inseparable fact —the extent of benefit which would accrue to the great body of the community as consumers of wheat. But though I think the agriculturists exaggerate both the gain to themselves and the loss to the general community which the Corn-laws occasion, I see quite enough of reality in the case, by whomsoever or whensoever stated, to make me a decided friend to a free trade in the prime articles of human nourishment. It is perfectly undeniable—indeed it is admitted on both sides of the argument—that the Corn-laws do raise the price of human subsistence more or less. The degree to which they produce this effect I shall presently examine. Such rise of price during years of average home crops, or of only moderate deficiency, is an indisputable fact. In the farmer's vocabulary it is styled protection, and is extolled as the main benefit of the law. In the language of the consumer of corn, who petitions against the law, it is treated as an unjust imposition for the exclusive benefit of a particular class. This artificial enhancement of the price of corn is not only the great benefit, but the only benefit conferred by the Corn-laws upon the favoured class. It is the main evil, but it is far from being the only evil inflicted by these laws upon the mass of the community. We suffer not merely an enhancement of the price of corn positively, but an enhancement of its price comparatively with the continental countries; and this imposes upon all our exporting manufacturers a factitious burden and disadvantage as compared with those continental rivals with whom they are compelled to compete. Nor is this all. As if the causes of variation in price were not already grievous enough, and numerous enough in the unavoidable variety of the seasons, we have opened an additional source of uncertainty, entirely of our own creating, in the fluctuations of the scale of duty. We have deranged the evenness and steadiness of our continental trade by this intermittent opening and shutting of the ports. We have rendered ourselves liable to be called upon, on occasions when it may be in the highest degree inconvenient, for a sudden export of bullion, in such manner as greatly to complicate the management of our currency, if not to endanger its stability. And we have done everything in our power both to suggest to continental nations the idea of establishing manufactures of their own, and to afford to them the facilities of doing so. All these are great and serious additional mischiefs, over and above the leading mischief of imposing upon every man in the community the necessity of purchasing the primary sustenance of life at a higher price; for it is this which I must consider to be the leading mischief, bearing, as it does, with more or less of hardship upon every man without exception: and I cannot but remark that this question is sometimes too exclusively argued, as if it were a manufacturer's question and nothing else—as if no one suffered from the Corn-laws except the exporters of cotton and woollen fabrics. If I considered this debate as a mere question between manufacturers on one side and agriculturists on the other, assuredly I should not feel near so strong an interest in it as I do at present. But I am firmly persuaded that the mischievous effects of the Corn-laws are far more comprehensive and pervading, and reach over a large majority of the entire nation. I know, Sir, that it was contended the other night by the right hon. Baronet, the Member for Tamworth, and the assertion was repeated by the hon. Members for Yorkshire and Kent yesterday, and by the hon. Member for Lincolnshire to-day, that the question of the Corn-laws is a labourer's question—that the labouring classes generally are gainers, and not losers by a high price of provisions. When Gentlemen so confidently assert this proposition, I should be glad to know how many of the artisans, the journeymen, and the operatives generally, who inhabit this vast metropolis, they will persuade to agree with them? The price of wheat in December 1835, was 36*s.*; in December 1838, it was 78*s.* Let gentlemen ask of any artisan in this metropolis whether the variation in his wages has been such as to enable him to command as much of the necessaries and comforts of life in the last of these periods as in the first? This is a question simply of matter of fact, and I rejoice that it has been distinctly put in issue in the present debate, Our speeches in this House will be read by artisans and journeymen, and will be discussed at their various meetings. The hon. Member for Yorkshire said truly last night, that on this point the labourer's experience was worth more than any theory; and I shall be quite content to leave it to the judgment of any artisan or labourer who may read these debates, whether his condition was better in December 1838, when the price of wheat was 78*s.* than in December 1835, when the price of wheat was 36*s.* per quarter. This is a point which every artisan and every labourer will be able to determine by means of his own feelings and his own recollection, and it will then be seen which of the parties is most accurately informed of the real condition of the operative classes. But, Sir, if I should for a moment admit that the wages of artisans and journeymen have increased to such an extent as to make the artisan as well off in December, 1838, as he was in December, 1835, at whose expense must this variation have taken place? At the expense of his employer. And out of what fund is the employer to be compensated? He can neither claim nor obtain any compensation whatever. Take it which way you will, the hardship must fall somewhere—upon one or other of the two parties—either upon the artisan, if wages do not rise, or upon the employer, if they do rise. I believe, Sir, that the hardship does, in part, press upon both, but far more upon the artisan than upon the employer. From all the inquiries which I have been able to make among my constituents and elsewhere, I have not been able to find that wages of artisans or journeymen are at all sensibly higher now than they were in 1835. Sure I am, that the cases in which they have been raised, in any degree approaching to the rise in the price of provisions, are cases of rare exception. Now I am sure that Gentlemen will see that the difference in the cost of the loaf, between 1835 and 1838, must be most painfully felt in the household of every artisan in the metropolis. The rise of the loaf from 7*d.* to 10*d.*, looking at the large proportion of an artisan's income which is spent in bread, must abridge the comforts of himself and his family to a material and distressing extent—to an extent which would appear to every Gentleman present insupportably calamitous, if we were to enlarge the figures representing increased cost to the dimensions requisite for adapting them to the higher incomes. And this is a comparison which is but too apt to escape our notice, from the small proportion of an opulent man's expenditure which is devoted to the purchase of the actual necessaries of life. I am aware that hon. Members attempt to escape from this conclusion by asserting, that there is less employment for the labouring classes, and a greater proportion of them deprived of work, when provisions are cheap; and that there is greater and more constant employment for them when provisions are dear. Assuredly the hon. Member ought to be perfectly certain of his ground upon this matter before he ventures upon the very grave measure of artificially increasing the price of their food—he ought to be perfectly certain that the source of compensation which he professes to open to them will be both sufficient and infallible in its operation. Has he any reason to be thus certain? I maintain, that there is the best possible reason to be certain of the contrary. The aggregate means of employing labour throughout the community are never increased, but always diminished, by a rise in the price of provisions; they are never diminished, but always increased, by a fall in the price of provisions. Admit for a moment, that the rise of corn enables the tillage-farmers to employ more labourers, let me ask, from what source the tillage-farmers derive these augmented means? Simply from the greater sum paid to them by the consumers of corn—in other words, by a general contribution at the expense of the entire community. Surely, then, if the farmer possesses increased means, every other person in the community has diminished means. The additional sum handed over to him is no new creation, but simply a deduction from the means of others. The aggregate fund cannot, by any construction, be made out to be larger; it is, on the contrary, decidedly smaller; for, not to mention other reasons, the maintenance of the agriculturists themselves and of all those dependent upon them, as well as the maintenance of all other possessors of capital, becomes more costly under such a state of things; and thus much, at least, is a total and uncompensated loss. The increased means of the farmer, putting aside all consideration of the injustice of the transfer, are very far, indeed, from adequately compensating the diminished means possessed by the remaining community. And let us even look at the question simply as it regards the farmer and the agricultural labourer, which is the point of view in which the advocates of the Corn-laws delight to put it. You tell me that the agricultural labourers are better employed, better paid, and more comfortably off, when the price of corn is high than when it is low. I ask in reply, what does history say in respect to this assertion? At what period was it that the abuses of the Poor-law first began? Was it not in 1795 and 1796, when the price of corn first rose, partly in consequence of bad seasons, partly in consequence of the increased cost and difficulty of importation occasioned by the war? Is it not matter of undoubted record, that the difficulties and privations of the labouring classes, agricultural labourers as well as all others, were, at that time, greater than they had ever been before, to such a degree, that the allowance system was then first resorted to, under the fatal effects of which the country continued to suffer more and more until the passing of the Poor-law Amendment Act in 1834? And how came the allowance system to be resorted to? Simply because the farmers would not raise the wages of their labourers to any thing like the extent required by the rise of provisions. Such was the condition of the labouring classes at that time that propositions were made in Parliament by Mr. Whitbread and others, to fix the rate of wages by law: and various other suggestions were offered, which, whatever we may think of their impolicy as remedies, indicate, at any rate, that the condition of the labourer had become materially worse from the rise in the price of provisions. Now, Sir, having adverted to the period when the abuses of the Poor-laws first attained alarming magnitude, let me call the attention of the House to the period when they were terminated. The Poor-law Amendment Act was passed in 1834, and first came into efficient operation in 1835. Now, it was just at that time that the price of wheat was at the lowest point at which it has ever stood throughout the present century; and therefore, according to the theory of those who defend the Corn-laws, it ought to have been precisely the period in which the labouring classes were least employed, and in the worst possible condition as to pay. But has any one ever adventured to assert that such was the fact in 1835? On the contrary, do not the Poor-law commissioners tell us in their report, that the task of introducing the new system, and the stricter administration of relief, was greatly and signally facilitated as well by the extensive demand for labour as by the unusual cheapness of bread? The arguments held by the opponents of the Poor-law were even more decisive still in proof of the point which I wish to reach. The opponents of the Poor-laws said—the commissioners could never have found it possible to introduce any system so harsh and so full of privation to the labouring poor if they had not been singularly favoured by the circumstances of the moment—if they had not begun to introduce it at a time when the labouring classes were remarkably well off, and remarkably well employed. I wish you to turn your attention well to this contrast. I wish you to contrast the extreme suffering of the labouring poor during the high prices which ranged between 1795 and 1801—sufferings attested by all the writings and speeches of the time, as well as by the still more decisive evidence of the unhappy allowance-system to which they gave rise. I wish you to contrast this state of things with the condition of the labourer during the year 1835 with its unusual cheapness of bread. How is such a comparison to be reconciled with the theory of those who teach us that cheap bread diminishes both the employment of the labourer, and his command over the necessaries and comforts of life, and that dear bread is to him a time both of more employment, and of more food and clothing? It results indisputably from the evidence taken by the committees of this House, which were appointed both in 1833 and in 1836, to inquire into the subject of agricultural distress, that whatever grounds might exist for complaining of distress among the farmers, there was no ground whatever for believing that distress existed among the agricultural labourers. The testimony taken before those committees proved, that the labourer, so far from being worse off than usual, was comparatively better off. And if any gentleman will consult the records of our population—if he will consult Mr. Mylne's Treatise on Annuities, or the valuable work on the progress of the nation, by Mr. Porter, he will find that the aggregate number of marriages throughout the country is greatly and sensibly reduced during a period of dear corn, and that the records of the disastrous years 1800 and 1801, present a striking confirmation of this remarkable fact, attesting as it does so powerfully the diminished comfort of the labouring population. And if we inspect the table of the wages of various descriptions of labourers and artisans given by Mr. Porter in page 252 of the second volume of his work, for the period between 1800 and 1836, we shall find that this theory of the better condition of the labourer when bread is dear is totally opposed to the facts of the case. I lay the greatest stress on the question of the Corn-laws as it bears upon the well-being of the labouring classes. I do so, because I consider this beyond all comparison the most interesting point of view in which the question can be looked at. I am quite content to meet the right hon. Baronet, the Member for Tamworth, and to argue this as a labourer's question. I desire no better than to have it determined upon a review of the condition of the working people generally, during a high price and a low price of bread. Out of the 15,000,000 quarters of wheat consumed in this country, by far the greater portion is consumed by the labouring classes? and it will require an ingenuity surpassing even that which is possessed by the right hon. Member for Tamworth to demonstrate that they, the chief consumers, are better fed and more comfortable when they have to pay 1*s.* for their loaf than when they can purchase it for 6*d.* Besides, let me ask, is it intended to apply this same doctrine to the other articles which the working man consumes? Is it alleged that the labourer is better off when fuel is dear, when clothing is dear, when soap, candles, tea or sugar are selling at a high price? Would it be a good thing for the labourer if woollen stuffs were as dear now as they were a century ago, and if soap were subject to as high a duty as it was during the last war? If dear corn be so very good a thing, why do agricultural gentlemen complain so much of the dearness of malt and beer, arising out of the malt tax? I believe we have not yet discontinued the old and primeval feeling of gratitude and satisfaction when our harvest is abundant, and mournful anxiety when it proves defective; but if the doctrine contended for by the hon. Member for Yorkshire were just, that the general body of labourers are worse off and less comfortable when the price of corn is low, most certainly an abundant harvest would be a national misfortune; the more unskilful our husbandry, upon this supposition, the better would it be for the country. For what is the meaning of good and skilful husbandry, except the insuring of a large return of produce in exchange for a small cost? And what is the whole scope and purpose of improvements in agriculture except the augmentation of the return and the diminution of the cost; in other words, the reduction of the price of corn and other products of land? If it be once admitted that a diminished price of corn deteriorates the condition of the labouring classes—if it be true, as hon. Gentlemen allege, that the labourer in Russia and Prussia is miserably off, because the price of provisions is so very low in those countries; if this be true, I say, then all your improvements in agriculture are injurious instead of beneficial. The hon. Member for Yorkshire has told us that the agricultural producers in this country require protection, on account of the heavy debt and taxation which presses upon them, against the competition of untaxed produce from other countries. Let me remark, in passing, that this is an argument altogether at variance with the argument which I have before been combating—altogether at variance with the argument which represents dear corn as a good thing in itself, and the actual operating cause of an increased measure of comfort to the labouring classes. When the hon. Gentleman touches upon taxation, he throws overboard altogether the pretended interest of the working classes in maintaining a high price of corn—he represents the high price of corn to be an evil in itself, but an evil brought upon us by the pressure of heavy and unavoidable taxation. So far I agree with the hon. Member, that the amount of taxation which the country is called upon to pay is a serious burden, and calls upon us to employ our most anxious care in maintaining unimpaired the resources of the nation which is to bear it. But I cannot at all concur in his assertion, that the existence of this burden is either a reason as matter of expediency, or a justification as matter of equity, for imposing duties on foreign corn. He calls it a reason for protecting the agriculturists; I call it a reason for protecting the whole nation—for protecting them against loss and mischief from every quarter; but especially against that which is among the heaviest of all losses—the obligation of paying a higher price than is necessary for the primary nourishment of the people. The national debt and taxation is a burden upon all of us without exception, equally and indiscriminately. The protection which is to aid us in meeting it ought also to extend to all, equally and indiscriminately. Both he and I, and every man in the community, are to bear our shares of the joint burden—neither of us can have any rightful claim to throw his portion of the burden on another. Now, my complaint against the hon. Gentleman's scheme of protection is, that it is not equal and indiscriminate over the whole nation—that it does not comprehend all alike—that it is protection only to a few, and that, too, at the expense of the rest. You protect the seller of corn, but at whose expense do you protect him? At the expense of the buyer—your own countryman also, whose purse and whose comforts ought to be just as dear to you as those of the seller. You profess to make the seller of corn more able to pay taxes, by enabling him to obtain a higher price for his produce. Do you not see that by the very same act, and at least to the same degree, you render the buyer less able to pay taxes? The seller may be the richer for your interference, but the buyer is most assuredly the poorer; and how then is the aggregate power of paying taxes—seller and buyer both included—at all increased by your interference? By enabling the seller to augment the price of his produce, you relieve him either wholly or in part from the weight of taxation; but you only accomplish this object by casting a double burden on the shoulders of the buyer. Let your national debt and taxation be as great as it may, such protection can in no way augment your aggregate capacity of paying it: in point of fact, it sensibly lessens your capacity of paying it, because the productive industry of the nation comes to be worse and more unnaturally distributed. In order to cram and pamper one member of the great national family, you steal away the nourishment, and stint the growth, of the remainder. But the hon. Gentleman would induce us to believe that the national taxation falls upon the agriculturist not only in common with the whole country, but even to a greater degree than it falls upon any other person in the country. He tells us that the raising of corn from the land is more heavily taxed than the fabrication of manufactured goods, or than any other employment of capital; and from this excess of taxation he draws one of his arguments in defence of the Corn-laws. I can only view this argument as an indirect censure upon the actual distribution of taxation. If the hon. Gentleman can prove that an undue proportion of our existing imposts fall upon the cultivation of the land, let us rectify that erroneous distribution forthwith. Let us alter our system of taxation, and re-assess it in a manner less unequal and exceptionable. Surely this is the proper quarter to seek for a remedy, instead of providing a dubious and pretended compensation by means of Corn-laws. If my property in a parish is assessed beyond its proper value, to the poor-rates, or other local tax, I am fairly entitled to complain, and to have the assessment rectified. But what reasonable judge would dream of granting me redress by decreeing that the original inequality should be maintained unaltered, but that I should be allowed by way of compensation to help myself to a certain portion of the produce of my neighbour s lands. If then I could go along with the hon. Gentleman in affirming that our existing taxation presses unduly and unequally upon the cultivation of the land, I could not agree with him in adopting the Corn-laws as the appropriate remedy. But is the fact as he states? Is it true that there exists this peculiarly severe and unequal pressure upon the cultivators of land? I must dispute the fact. I look in vain for any existing impost of which this can be truly predicated. The hon. Member talks of the malt-tax. Why, the farmers might have some reason to complain of the malt-tax if we were allowed to import or to make malt, duty free, out of foreign barley; but so long as all malt is charged alike, from whatever barley it may be made, I contend that the farmer has no more right than any other consumer of beer to complain of the pressure of the tax. In my eyes, I confess, there seems no objection to the malt-tax, other than that which belongs to taxation under any and every form. But if the continuance of the malt-tax is to be made a pretence for upholding the Corn-laws, let us discontinue it forthwith, and let us come to a property-tax at once. This will be but a small price to pay for the great national benefit of a free trade in corn. But then the hon. Gentleman tells us, that to permit a free trade in corn, is to be dependent upon foreign nations for our subsistence. Certainly the word dependance has a terrific sound; but if it be so overwhelming an evil to be dependant upon foreign nations for our supplies of corn, does the hon. Gentleman pretend, that our present Corn-laws emancipate us from this evil. Are we not dependant upon foreign importations at present? Yes; it will be admitted, we are dependant upon foreign importations at present; but this is only a special emergency. Under our present Corn-laws we are only occasionally dependant upon foreign nations not habitually. So much the worse, Sir, in my opinion. Occasional dependance is the very worst and most dangerous species of dependance. No man is so likely to be disappointed of his supply as the occasional buyer, who refuses to open any regular trade, who gives no notice of his wants—who avowedly and scornfully repudiates everything like mutual interest and reciprocal benefit from the intercourse. Habitual dealing ensures preparation for your wants and creates on the part of the seller a necessity for your custom; occasional dealing gives you the last chance instead of the first, and brings you into the market as the unexpected and intrinsic invader of a stock intended for others. If dependance upon foreign importation be really an evil, I contend, that we sustain it now in the worst possible form and under the most hazardous contingencies. We wantonly throw away the benefit which dependance would carry with it—we exaggerate all the possibilities of evil with which it is accompanied. Our Corn-laws do not make us independent of foreign supplies; they render us more painfully dependent than we should be under a free trade, because the dependance is less reciprocal and less binding upon the foreigner. Connected with this view of the question, there is another evil of serious magnitude which arises out of the Corn-laws, and which I am the more anxious not to omit, as it obtrudes itself forcibly on the attention of all commercial men. I allude to the periodical derangement which the Corn-laws occasion in our monetary system. The effect of our present Corn-laws is to interdict any regular and steady import of corn, and to leave us in seasons of ordinary productiveness, with a very low stock of corn at the moment of harvest; so that when our harvest falls short, we become large and sudden purchasers at extravagant prices. These purchases are certain to produce a powerful effect upon the exchanges, and to cause a great and continued export of the precious metals. Such a disturbance cannot take place without being seriously felt throughout all the trading classes in the community, who find themselves cramped and restricted in their ordinary sphere of borrowing, by the necessity imposed upon the Bank of England and other bankers, of adjusting their loans so as to meet this sudden drain from abroad. Let me impress upon the House, that this is in itself an inconvenience of no light magnitude, pressing upon the trading community at large, upon the prudent, as well as upon the imprudent. But it is an inconvenience which might well be aggravated into a fearful national calamity, if the drain for foreign corn should arise at a moment when other circumstances are of themselves tending to produce a drain upon the coffers of the Bank. If, for example, we had experienced the misfortune of a bad harvest in 1825, so that the drain upon the Bank, which was at that time going on, had been aggravated by sudden importations of corn from abroad, it is very certain, that the difficulties of the Bank must have become all but insurmountable. And if we refer back to a period still more recent — to the commercial embarrassments which marked the close of the year 1836 — I feel very sure, if we had had a bad harvest in that year, and if the Bank of England had had to contend with the additional difficulty of a large export of gold arising from this specific cause, that the pressure upon our money market, and upon the trading interests generally, would have been most severe and calamitous. It has so happened, hitherto, that the demand for gold in payment for large imports of corn has not coincided in point of time with other causes of drain upon the Bank of England. I hope most sincerely, that no such coincidence will take place; but we have no right to presume, that it will not; and, if unfortunately it should take place, Gentlemen must make up their minds, that not only will the state of trade become most calamitous and distressing, but the danger to the Bank of England itself will be extreme. I entreat the House to keep this consideration carefully in mind, in weighing the general bearings of the Corn-laws; it will be too late to take precautions when the moment of pressure actually arrives. To all these arguments, demonstrative of the impolicy of the Corn-laws, the hon. Gentleman will oppose his statement of the extent of land which will be thrown out of wheat cultivation, and the extent of distress which will be occasioned among the various parties connected with agriculture. I have taken some pains to acquaint myself with the prices of foreign corn, and with the quantities which might be obtained at those prices; for these two circumstances ought on no account to be separated in looking at the question of the foreign corn trade. At Dantzic and Odessa the real price is regulated by the demand for export; when there is no demand for export the quoted prices are merely nominal for they represent no real transaction between buyers and sellers. In order to form an opinion of the extent of import which would take place under a free corn trade we must look at the foreign prices as they stand during years when the demand for export is efficient and extensive. Now, judging according to these data, and assuming a quantity of one million of quarters of wheat to be demanded abroad for the English market, I am firmly persuaded, that such a quantity could not be brought to England under 45*s.* a-quarter, if the trade were free and all duty abolished. If you wanted a larger quantity, the price would be higher still. To show that I have here stated a low price as the minimum at which foreign wheat could be imported, I will quote from a paper which I hold in my hand, containing a tabular series of the annual average prices of wheat at Dantzic. I find that the average price of wheat at Dantzic in 1829 was 47*s.* 1*d.*; in 1830, 42*s.* 2*d.*; in 1831, 50*s.* 2*d.*—the three years averaging 46*s.* 5*d.* Now, all these three years were years of real demand for exportation; and I contend that it is only according to the standard of such years that you can safely judge what the prices would be under a system of free trade; and the prices quoted during years when there is no demand for exportation, are in truth merely nominal and illusory. It will be seen, therefore, that in estimating the probable import price under a free trade, assuming 1,000,000 quarters at 45*s.*, I make a large allowance for improvement and extension of culture in foreign lands. It is my impression that, under a perfectly free trade in corn, a quantity of about 1,000,000 quarters would be supplied from abroad in ordinary years out of the 15,000,000 quarters which we habitually consume in these islands; and that this supply would come at a price of about 45*s.* I repeat, that as an opponent of the Corn-laws, I should think that I had a stronger case if I could make out that the price would be 35*s.* or 25*s.* And I leave it to the sober consideration of Gentlemen who support the Corn-laws, whether they are really adding to the stability and permanence of the restrictive system, by impressing the people with a belief that free trade would at once lower the price of corn to so vast an extent. For my part, I neither wish to overstate the case as regards the buyers, nor as regards the sellers; I think it of importance that the case should be understood, as regards both of them under its true colours. Though I sometimes hear the case exaggerated as respects the gain to the buyer by a free trade in corn, yet I much oftener hear it exaggerated on the other side. I hear far more extravagant apprehensions expressed as to the amount of loss which will be sustained by the seller. I am very far from believing that the British soil is so barren or niggardly, or the British cultivator so helpless, in comparison with the Pole or the Russian, as many persons represent, and I am glad to find myself on this point in agreement with the hon. Member for Yorkshire. The cultivator in Poland may have a greater abundance of uncultivated or unexhausted land; but this is his grand and primary advantage —I may say, almost his only advantage. For though he pays smaller wages to his labourer, yet the labour which he obtains in return, being allied with a much less efficient apparatus of agricultural capital, is far less productive than that of a labourer in England; and it has been asserted frequently by land surveyors, that a day's work of an English labourer in Middlesex, paid at 2*s.* 6*d.*, comes cheaper to them in the end than a day's work of an Irish labourer in the South of Ireland, paid only at 6*d.* The English agriculturist, on the contrary, has the advantage of more capital, of better agricultural implements, of the best roads and communications which exist in any country of the world, of a more abundant supply of manure, and of the most certain and accessible markets almost at his door. It is quite unquestionable that, with all these advantages, combined with the cost of transport of foreign corn from abroad, the British agriculturist, even under a free trade in corn, will furnish the vastly greater part of the corn consumed in this country. And I will go farther and say, that if the British agriculturist chose to turn all his advantages to full account—if he chose to avail himself of all the improvements in agriculture, and of all the ameliorated systems which are practised by the best cultivators in England and still more in Scotland—if, I say, the British agriculturist would turn his resources to the best account, he might undoubtedly grow corn cheap enough to render the importation of foreign corn in ordinary years very inconsiderable indeed. In token of what remains undone, and of what might well be done by the British agriculturist, for the amelioration of his present system, I will only appeal to a very valuable and instructive pamphlet, published in 1836 by the hon. Member for Lincolnshire (Mr. Handley), under the title of a "Letter to Lord Spencer on the formation of an Agricultural Association." The hon. Gentleman in this pamphlet contrasts the small improvements which are perceptible in our agriculture with the immense improvements which have distinguished our manufactures; he is no partisan of the doctrine of finality, now so popular on both sides of this House, in respect to other matters; he tells the English agriculturists that they have much to learn, and he points out to them where they may learn it; he admonishes them, amongst various other matters, that bone manure, in spite of its proved and vast utility, is throughout the greater part of England unknown and untried. Moreover, he adds, that if prices had remained as high as they were, and farming as easy and as profitable as it was during the war, the English agriculturists might safely have remained indolent and unimproving; but that the times are so trying now as to call upon them for their best efforts, and for the employment of the most efficient methods of production. Two points I would particularly notice as to this statement—first, that while our agriculture remains so much behind what it ought to be, we have no right to say, that our farmers cannot compete with the foreigner; secondly, that the way to accelerate agricultural improvement in England, is not protection and high prices, but free and open competition and low prices. I do not hesitate to say, that the trade of agriculture will never repose upon its just and natural basis until it is left entirely free, and divested of the delusive protection which it now enjoys at the expense of the remaining community. So long as the bargain between farmer and landlord is adjusted on the supposition of an artificial enhancement of price of his produce, which is sure in the nature of things to break down and fail periodically—so long will agricultural distress be of constant recurrence. For protection to the farmer differs in one essential respect from protection to any domestic manufacture. The manufacturer can determine beforehand what quantity of goods he will produce; he makes what is sufficient for the supply of the market, and he makes no more. The farmer can never know beforehand what will be his year's produce; the inequality of the seasons forbids it; and when years of abundance arrive, he finds that his protection is altogether illusory, while his rent and the charges upon him have been calculated as if the protection was real. It is the seasons of general abundance which are seasons of loss to the farmer, and under the system of protection they are doubly losing to him, because he is precluded from any exportation of his surplus produce, which would find its vent naturally in other countries, if our prices were left to preserve their level, as they would do under a system of free trade. Whatever interest the landlord may have in a system of protection—though even to him it promises far more than it performs—I am persuaded that the farmer has no interest in it whatever. Low rent, no artificial protection, together with that consciousness of stability in our legislation which a free trade alone can impart—these are the circumstances under which the application of capital to land will become the most steadily and permanently profitable, and which will insure the most rapid increase in the home demand for landed produce. Several Gentlemen who disapprove of the present Corn-laws are favourable to the substitution of a fixed rate of duty. I confess, Sir, that this is not my opinion. I agree with my hon. Friend, the Member for Wolverhampton, that the trade in corn ought to be perfectly free, merely at a nominal duty, for the purpose of registration. I shall not, indeed, deny, that a small fixed duty would be an improvement upon our present system; but I can find no satisfactory reason for retaining any duty at all, and I think there are very forcible reasons against it. Sir, I fear that my view of this question will not be found in concurrence with that of the majority of the House; but, impressed as I am with a strong sense of the vices of our present legislation, I cannot refrain from urging it most earnestly upon their attention. They may depend upon it that this is a question which will never be finally at rest until it is placed upon its true and solid basis, its real centre of gravity, equal justice, equal protection, perfect absence of all favour or preference between the buyer and the seller of corn. The working of our present law is most mischievous: the scope and purpose of it is worse than mischievous, it is full of partiality and unkindness and injustice—it lays a heavy tax upon the buyer of corn for a very dubious benefit to the seller. I know, indeed, that this purpose cannot be thoroughly worked out, and constantly attained: abundant harvests will lower the price of corn, in spite of any Corn-law; but the purpose of the Legislature is not the less exceptionable, because it is occasionally defeated by the bounty of Providence. We are trying to impose an artificial minimum upon the price of corn, to the detriment of the buyer. What would be said if we tried to impose an artificial maximum to the detriment of the seller—if we copied the law of the maximum, proposed by Robespierre in the French Revolution, by which every seller of corn was forbidden to ask above a certain price for his produce? The one proposition is a tax upon the buyer, the other a tax upon the seller; both are alike unjust in principle; but our Corn-law is assuredly not the least unjust of the two, because the great mass of the community are and always must be buyers and not sellers of corn. Be assured, Sir, that this is a principle to which the great body of the people will never be reconciled; and however the discontent upon the subject may slumber during periods of abundance, it will break forth with renewed violence and intensity during periods of scarcity, in such a manner as to leave neither peace or certainty to the agriculturist. This, Sir, is a melancholy prospect; but the man who is enabled by unjust legislation to obtain possession of the property of others, will find himself compelled to sit with anxious eye and sword drawn to watch it. Nor is it only discontent and clamour against which the defenders of the Corn-laws will have to contend. For when, in addition to the unjust principle upon which these laws rest, we sum up, the practical inconvenience and national loss which they occasion—the augmented price of every man's subsistence—the impediments which they cast in the way of our manufacturing industry—the restriction which they interpose to the sale of our exports—the derangements which they are sure to produce periodically in our monetary system—the powerful influence which they exercise in engendering exclusive feelings among other nations, in alienating and dissociating the great family of mankind, and thus destroying one main guarantee for the continuance of peace—when we sum up the various mischiefs which are involved in the practical working of the Corn-laws, I feel well assured that the defenders of these enactments will have to contend, not only against periodical bursts of indignant discontent, but against the quiet and efficacious march of disinterested reason. Gentlemen will not forget that this question is now undergoing a keener discussion than ever it underwent before—that it is talked of and agitated in town and in country, among manufacturers and artisans as well as among farmers: and I entertain a confident belief that the result of this discussion will be, to demonstrate how vast and real are the evils of the Corn-laws—how delusive their promises of benefit. I am persuaded that the conviction will become more and more general among all classes—that, whether we look to the aggregate prosperity of the nation, or to the harmony of our citizens among themselves, on both grounds our true and solid interest consists in a free trade in corn.

The Earl of *Darlington* said, that the Gentlemen who advocated the abolition of the Corn-laws were not content with the extent, great as it was, to which this country pushed her manufactures; nothing would serve them but to make this country manufacture for every other country in Europe, if not the whole world; they would not allow any country to manufacture for itself. But he contended, that this, in the present state of Europe, was impossible; and if it were possible, it would not be just. Now hon. Gentlemen were accustomed to say on this question, that it ought to be considered as affecting the interests of every class; unless, therefore, it could be shown, that to make this country a manufacturing country would be advantageous, or, at the least, not detrimental, to the interests of the people generally, they could not consistently argue in this way. He for one was quite ready to estimate the manufacturing interest at its full value, but he saw no reason why the manufacturing interest should be predominant. But this was the object aimed at by the repealers of the Corn-laws, and he maintained, that by making the country a manufacturing country, they would very much injure the resources from which it derived its wealth and its prosperity. Only let those two great interests, the agricultural and the manufacturing, go hand in hand, and he held that nothing could injure them. They were twin brothers, and ought not to be parted. He did not know the cause of the display of hostility which was made by the advocates of repeal against the landed interest; the landed interest stood strictly upon the defensive—they made no attack—their motto was, "Live and let live." They wanted to injure no man; but, when motives for their conduct were most unjustly and unfairly attributed, they were prepared to stand forward and defend themselves. The speech of the hon. Member for Wolverhampton had astonished him greatly, but especially that part of it where the hon. Member pronounced this to be strictly a landlord's question, and declared, that the farmers had not anything to do with it. Now, with all due deference to the hon. Gentleman, and to his knowledge on other subjects, he thought he knew as much from personal experience, and from habits of acquaintance with the farmers, of the true interests of the agriculturists of this country as the hon. Member, and he certainly did most completely differ from the hon. Member's views as to that point. But before addressing himself to the arguments of the hon. Member for Wolverhampton, he would first take notice of two parts of the argument of the hon. Member for London (Mr. Grote) in which the hon. Member appeared to have most completely contradicted himself. The hon. Member had set out by saying, that the effect of the Corn-laws was to double prices; he afterwards declared, that if the present system were abolished, corn could not be imported under 45*s*. a quarter. Now, if as the hon. Member assumed, the first effect of abolition would be to reduce the price of bread, so as to enable the labourer to get it at half its present cost, and if, as was the fact, the average of the period between 1833 and 1838 had not been more than 48*s*. a quarter, making a difference of only 3*s*. over the importation price, as stated by the hon. Member, what became of the labourer's being enabled to eat his bread at half its present price, in consequence of an abolition of the present system? There was a great contradiction, he thought, in these statements of the hon. Member. The Chamber of Commerce at Manchester had adopted the most unjust means of agitation on this subject; they had endeavoured to excite the people almost up to the point of taking arms; and in his opinion, but for their efforts, the House would not have heard a single word more this year than the last. The hon. Member for the Tower Hamlets stated on a former occasion, that great apathy had prevailed on the subject, but that was previous to the late agitation of the question of abolition. Every means of conducting that agitation, as applied to the House of Commons, resolved itself into getting up a great pressure from without; but at all events all the means used, and the attempt at pressure from without among the rest, had signally failed. The hon. Member for Wolverhampton said, that the result of the Corn-laws, by causing high prices, was to cast a greater number of agricultural labourers into the labour market, and thereby to bring down the rate of wages. He did not see how the effect of the system was to cast more labourers into the market: he had always understood, that the labourers were not so much of wandering beings as to be in the habit of repairing from one market to another; that they were, as it were, domesticated, and might almost be considered as heirlooms on particular estates; and that, except in those unfortunate cases where they were obliged from disastrous circumstances to sell up their little all, and remove from their cottages under the pressure of bad times, they were a most stationary class. In short, he was perfectly at a loss to know how the result of the Corn-laws could be to cast a greater number of agricultural labourers into the wages market, because the agricultural labourers were fixed to the spot, and their numbers neither increased nor diminished. Again, the hon. Member said, that the maintenance of the Corn-laws did not keep the agricultural labouring classes in employment. Did the hon. Member, however, mean to say, that the abolition would cause an increase of employment? If this was not the hon. Member's meaning, he (the Earl of Darlington) did not comprehend him, especially as he did not go into details in proof of his assertions. It was true, that agricultural labourers were not distributed equally throughout the country; in some places they were more abundant, in others there was a scarcity; and it was very likely, and very natural, that emigration might have taken place from the former districts. But that was the strongest argument why they ought not to suffer any land to fall out of cultivation. It was a strong reason, if on no other ground, still on considerations of humanity alone, for keeping the present amount of land in cultivation, in order to give the agricultural labourer employment at home. The hon. Gentleman seemed to think, that great numbers of agricultural labourers had been thrown out of employment when the thrashing machine came into use, and he argued, that that event and its consequences were soon forgotten. "And such would be the case," said the hon. Member, "if the Corn-laws were abolished, and a great number of acres thrown out of cultivation, and consequently a number of agricultural labourers disemployed, for we should shortly hear no more about their case than we do now about that of the sufferers by the introduction of thrashing machines." With regard to the thrashing machines it had been stated that they did away with the employment of a great many labourers; yet still there was not so much difference as people would expect, if the corn had continued to be thrashed by flails. The improvements in agriculture had certainly led to the employment of more labourers. Every farmer who used to employ ten labourers now employed fifteen, owing to those improvements, and, therefore, there were more labourers employed than had actually been employed before the invention of the thrashing machines. It had been said that the home consumers were not the landlords; they were not the landlords alone; but it must be allowed that they were the chief consumers; the farmers came next, and he believed that, taking the farmers and the landlords, and those who depended upon them, they consumed the greater part of the manufactured produce. Now, the real question came to this: however desirable it might be to extend your foreign trade, he would merely ask this—if as much as they extended their foreign trade, they did not decrease their home trade? He looked at that as quite certain, inasmuch as they increased the wealth of the foreigner, in order to purchase their manufactures; in the same ratio did they diminish the wealth of the home consumer. Did any Gentleman pretend to say, that the quantity of articles consumed at home did not in a great measure depend upon the wealth of the consumer? Then was it to be supposed, if they reduced their income (which it was admitted that they would do of both the landlord and the farmer) to a considerable extent, no matter whether to one-third or one-half, was it to be supposed that they could be purchasers of manufactures to the same extent as now? That followed as a matter of course. He asked what was the greatest value at that moment of home-made articles and what was the amount of the foreign trade? So far as he had seen, the value of our manufactures was 150 millions; of that there was only forty-eight or forty-nine millions on the average of the three greatest years exported. The quantity consumed at home, then, was of the value of 100 millions; just double the quantity exported. Supposing that instead of 100 millions of our manufactures being consumed at home and fifty millions abroad, that we only consumed fifty millions at home—what effect would that have? Certainly not to encourage the labour of your own countrymen in preference to the labour of foreigners. Then the hon. Gentleman seemed to think that the landowner was the only party opposed to the repeal of the Corn-laws. At least 3-5ths of the population, or 4-5ths, were at that moment in favour of the existing Corn-laws. But whom did he include with the land-owners? Surely, the farmers, the labourers, and all those depending on them had the same interest as the landowners. Those dependent on them were the whole of the retail shopkeepers in country towns, who were wholly dependent upon the farmers. In this great metropolis the landowners were considered the best customers of the tradesmen. Under these circumstances, taking it for granted that their prosperity depended on the prosperity of those belonging to the landed interest, how could they say but that that result depended upon the present system of the Corn-laws? It was really preposterous to suppose, in the first place, that either the farmer or the landlord could have any separate interest. He knew that it had been attempted to be proved; but it was perfectly well ascertained that their interests were so inseparable and interwoven, that it was impossible to disunite them: and never was there an instance that he had heard of in which the landlords were in prosperity, and the farmers were in a state of adversity. The hon. Member for Wolverhampton had stated last night, that although it was not many years ago since we had heard of agricultural distress, and although we had had agricultural meetings, and the right hon. Member the President of the Board of Trade had said that in five of the speeches from the Throne, within a few years, agricultural distress had been alluded to —although farmers could not pay their rents, yet still he had not heard that there was any distress amongst the landlords. He could only say, that if he made that assertion, and the hon. Member for Sheffield agreed in that opinion, he could only say that the inquiries he had made must have been very limited. Amongst the landlords there were different classes. The generality of landlords were not men of large property; there were some among them of large property. In regard to very large landowners, men of 20,000*l.*, or 30,000*l.*, or 40,000*l.* a-year, although at the time their tenants were distressed, did the hon. Member mean to say, that in consequence of that distress they did not make great reductions in their rents, because he knew they did? He would only mention one instance, and he knew a great number; he should not mention the name, and he hoped he should not be called on to mention it, that a landed proprietor had allowed his tenants a return on a scale of from eight to twenty per cent.; no tenant had been returned less than eight per cent.; some so far as twenty per cent. But although a very rich man, certainly his income had been diminished by so doing, yet still, from the amount of tenancy he possessed, and the rents he still received in point of quantity, he did not feel that diminution of income lower his means to such an extent as to make any considerable reduction in his establishment. But if a man of 3,000*l.* a-year was obliged to reduce his income twenty per cent., it did make a very material difference with regard to him; he would be obliged to reduce his establishment, he could not keep up the same appearance. But with regard to the way in which this question was proposed to affect the landlords, and not to affect the farmer, as many people had imagined, and even as he had heard it frequently asserted in that House, "let the landlords reduce their rents, and the lowering of the price of corn can make no difference to the farmer, inasmuch as that his rent is reduced, he is just as well off when corn is at a low price as if it were at a high one." In order to prove that argument, they must compare the amount of rent with the amount of gross produce; and what was the amount of rent in proportion to the amount of gross produce? He merely spoke of England and Wales, because in Ireland and Scotland it was different; there wages were lower. But in England and Wales he could speak to the amount of rent as compared with the gross produce, and it was in no instance more than one-fourth, in very few instances more than one-fifth. He would for the sake of argument take it at one-fourth; and suppose they took a very small farm, say a farm of 200*l.* a year; suppose they reduced the amount of rent from 200*l.* to 100*l.* a year, and the amount of gross produce was reduced in the same proportion from 800*l.* to 400*l.* Of the component parts which made up this gross, one-fourth went as the rent, the second-fourth went to the expense of labour, the third-fourth to the account of rates due and other expenses, and the remaining fourth went for the farmer's profit. This was, perhaps, not always the proportions; in some instances the farmer received greater profit. But what he meant to deduce was, the amount of rent was not greater than one-fourth of the amount of the produce. If they reduced the amount of rent one-half, from 200*l.* a year to 100*l.* a year, and if they reduced the gross produce from 800*l.* to 400*l.*, he thought it could not be stated that the farmer received too much if he paid 100*l.* for rent, when he received 400*l.* gross produce instead of 800*l.* Now, with regard to the present Corn-laws, he must say, first of all, that he thought there were many erroneous impressions as to what was the original object proposed to be attained by them. Many people supposed that the original object of the Corn-laws had no other effect than to force up the price of grain unnaturally, and to keep it at a much higher level than it ought to be, and, in short, to make the consumer pay nearly double the price to what he ought. Now, if that were the object of the Corn-laws, no doubt it had completely failed; because they all knew that since this Corn-law had been in operation—which was now a period of eleven years—during this period all sorts of prices had existed; very low prices, average prices, and this last year very high prices. He had the good fortune to be in Parliament at the time that this Act was framed; and he believed that there never was an Act of Parliament in which the framers of the Act took more pains—in which they were more anxious to make such a measure as should be efficient, and such a one as should give satisfaction both to the producer and to the consumer. Such, he said, was their object. The subject was at that time fully discussed—and debated by the most able statesmen on both sides, and the result of that debate was an immense majority in favour of the Corn-laws. Now, he said, if the object of the measure which he had just described was intended to force up the price of corn, the Corn-laws certainly had completely failed; but he maintained that such was not the fact. The first object was, to insure to the consumer plenty—to insure at all times and under all circumstances the greatest possible abundance, and likewise to insure that abundance at such a rate as that the grower should receive an adequate compensation and remuneration; and at the same time that the consumer should not pay a higher rate than he had a right to pay, compared with the price of labour. Now, in that respect, he said the present Corn-laws had been completely successful. In his opinion the Corn-laws had completely succeeded, because in the eleven years in which the law had been in force it had not always been advantageous to the grower, as they knew; neither had it always been advantageous to the consumer; but in the separate seasons it had been advantageous to both one and the other. Now, in certain cases, it had been supposed to have been of no use to the farmer, because for a period of years the corn was at a very low price. What was the cause of that? It was the superabundance of grain. If, then, at that time the superabundance of corn did not keep prices high, would it not follow, that if the Corn-laws had not existed, that superabundance would have been considerably increased by the admission of foreign grain? He did not see how it was to be denied, that if already they had more corn than they would consume—if an addition were brought into the market at that time, it must glut the market to a greater extent. The object of the Corn-laws, as he conceived, was this—so far as you could to encourage your home-growth to such an extent as that you may satisfy as nearly as possible the wants of your population without going abroad for grain. Now, how far could that be done by the improved mode of cultivation now in use, and by the additional quantity of land now brought under cultivation? Why, it had been proved that in an abundant harvest the country grew more corn than the people could consume, notwithstanding the increase of population. In those abundant years, what remained over and could not be consumed was purchased by speculators, and laid up in warehouses. That warehoused corn was brought into the market in average seasons, which, added to the quantity grown in those average seasons, was sufficient for the population in those average seasons. Well, then, was it desirable or was it not, if they could grow corn enough in this country to supply the population in every period except in a scarce season like the present—was it well that they should altogether repeal those laws, which, in his opinion, had worked so admirably, and which in every respect had realized the hopes of the framers of those laws? Was it desirable to repeal those laws and have recourse to the experiment of deriving their supply of corn from abroad? and which must be always precarious, and from which they could derive scarcely any advantage whatever? Because the only argument the opponents of the existing Corn-laws had made use of, even if the Corn-laws were abolished, amounted to this, that they did not believe it would make corn much cheaper. Then, if it would not, in the name of God what advantage were they to derive from the repeal of the Corn-laws? They knew the injury it would inflict on a number of people of all classes; and having that before their eyes, and knowing how the Corn-laws had worked to the present moment, having experienced their advantage a great number of years, was it wisdom or good policy to risk to experiment the unsatisfactory theories of mere political economists? He wished to make one allusion to the farmers. It might be said, that if they could persuade the labourer that by purchasing his corn from abroad, instead of from the producer in this country, he could have his loaf at half price, and have the same wages, and consequently double the income that he now had. If that were to come to pass, there could be no doubt but that he would be a very great gainer by the transaction; but would it be the case? Before he spoke of the agriculturist, he would speak of the manufacturer. The whole argument of the manufacturers who were making this great cry against the Corn-laws, and stating that their profits were diminished, was this—not that they cared one farthing for the operative, but they said that their profits were not so great as they used to be during the war; and, therefore, it was for that reason alone that they wanted to have the Corn-laws repealed, because by purchasing foreign corn, foreigners would purchase their manufactures in return. Now, he would but ask this question—was it intended to give the artisans the same wages? In no single instance had he heard them say, that if foreign corn was to be purchased at half the price of English corn, they would still keep the labourer's wages at the same level in the country. The only way in which the English manufacturer could keep the position abroad which he had obtained was, by manufacturing cheaper, and underselling the foreign manufacturer in his own market; and that could only be done by manufacturing at a cheaper rate of labour. If this were the case, then he would ask in what way the operative was to be benefitted? If he were to have his bread cheaper, he was to have his wages lowered in proportion. The operatives knew that the repeal was not intended for their advantage, and, therefore, they said, "We must remain as we are." But with regard to the agricultural labourer, they all knew that the condition of the agricultural labourer depended on the condition of the farmer, because he had to depend on the farmer, and on him alone, for his employment. It was known, as he had already stated, that when the farmer was in the best condition he could employ labourers to the greatest extent; when he was poor he employed fewer labourers, and they were in great distress also. That must always be the case; but at the same time the wages of the agricultural labourer always kept pace with the price of provisions. Therefore, in order that he might have bread cheaper, the argument to the agriculturist was this, that "dear bread and high wages were better than cheap bread and low wages." So the labourer's wages had always been increased in proportion to the high price of bread. He was alluding only to this very year to what had taken place. This was the first year in which we had had any scarcity, and corn had been very high. He only spoke of the country about Lincolnshire, and several Gentlemen would bear him out. The average wages of the agricultural labourer for several years past, exclusive of harvest, was from 10*s.* to 12*s.* per week. This amount of wages this present winter had been increased to 13*s.*, and afterwards to 13*s.* 6*d.* per week; and that was in consequence of the high price of corn. That was a proof of his argument that the wages of agricultural labourers were always proportioned to the price of corn. He had mentioned all the points on which he had intended to call the attention of the House. He begged to thank the House for its attention. He did not often address the House, but he could not pass over the present opportunity of giving his opinion on a subject on which he had thought much; but, at the same time, though he was in favour of the present system of Corn-laws, he would say that, if he found the majority of the country against him, he would, however injurious to himself, individually give up his opinion in favour of that majority. But, convinced as he was, that four-fifths of the people were in favour of the present system, and confident that it would not be detrimental to the prosperity of the country, he would uphold it until the contrary were shown. Till then he would continue to hold his present opinions, and not succumb to faction or yield to clamour.

Mr. *Clay* said, the interest he took in the question before the House was so well known, that it would scarcely be expected he should give a silent vote. It would not, however, be necessary for him to trespass at much length on the attention of the House. When, two years ago he brought forward a similar motion, he had the opportunity of stating fully his opinions on the policy of the Corn-laws. Those opinions remained on record; and not feeling that he could add much to the general views he then submitted to the House, he should content himself on the present occasion with commenting on some of the principal arguments adduced by hon. Gentlemen who had preceded him in the debate. In so doing, he should compress his remarks into the smallest possible compass; and that he might do so, he should confine himself strictly to the question before the House. What was that question? "That the House resolve itself into a Committee to take into consideration the Act of 9 Geo. 4th, regulating the importation of grain." The subject for their consideration, therefore, was simply whether there were sufficient grounds for a change in the existing law —if reasons sufficiently cogent against the maintenance of the present system could be advanced to induce the House to go into committee with a view to devise some better system, then would be the appropriate time to discuss the subsidiary questions that must arise out of the nature of the alteration to be proposed. It appeared to him, therefore, that his right hon. Friend, the President of the Board of Trade, was perfectly justified in saying that all those who disapproved of the present Corn-law, might with propriety, and, indeed, ought to vote for the committee. Of those who asserted the necessity of protection to the corn-grower, there were very many who thought the necessary protection might be far better and more usefully afforded by a fixed duty than by the present ascending and descending scale. Hon. Gentlemen so thinking might surely, with perfect propriety, vote for the committee, and in committee state their views as to the amount of duty necessary or desirable for the purpose of protection. Those views might be then with far greater accuracy and with the opportunity of much closer discussion contrasted with the views of others who advocated a perfectly free trade. At present that discussion might more conveniently be postponed. Thus, for instance, it appeared to him that all details bearing on the cost of raising corn abroad and of transporting it to this country on the one hand, or on the precise degree in which taxation enhances the cost of its production in this country on the other, were mainly out of place in the present debate. It would be well to go into both these considerations, but to do so satisfactorily would require of itself a long debate, and the House had first to decide whether there were or were not a *primâ facie* case in favour of some alteration. He should, therefore, strictly confine himself to considering whether the present law had so far answered its objects, and held out such prospects of future advantage as to induce the House to maintain it untouched, or whether, on the contrary it had not so miserably failed in its avowed and intended object, and threatened dangers so grave to the best interests of the country as to call imperatively for instant revision. Before applying himself, however, to this question, he must notice a reference on the part of the noble Lord who had last spoken, to what had fallen from him last year on the subject of agitation. It was quite true he had then said he did not believe the repeal of the Corn-laws would ever be carried except by pressure from without. He said it now, although he said it with regret. But he would ask the noble Lord, how was this momentous question treated by this House when there was no agitation out of doors? Was it not treated with the most contemptuous indifference? Was even a decent semblance made of opposing repeal by reasoning or discussion? Were not the opposite benches empty when the question was to be met by argument, and full only when it was to be decided by numbers? He did believe, therefore, that the repeal of the Corn-law would only be carried by agitation, and that the landholders would in this case add one more to the long list of proofs that no privileged class ever willingly surrendered power, and that they would only concede when concession should have lost all its grace and almost all its healthy efficiency. He came now to the speech of the hon. Gentleman the Member for the North Riding of Yorkshire, the Mover of the Amendment; and if he commented chiefly on what that hon. Gentleman had said, it certainly was not because he had been particularly struck by the force of the arguments or the peculiar pertinence of the facts the hon. Member had adduced. He noticed the speech of that hon. Gentleman because he was evidently the selected advocate of the supporters of the Corn-laws, and stated their case. Certainly he had never heard any case more weakly supported; but he said this without intending any want of courtesy to the hon. Gentleman; he had no doubt the hon. Gentleman had used the best arguments of which the case admitted. What were those arguments? Why, the old fallacies, which were invariably repeated in every Corn-law debate with as much confidence as if they had not been a thousand times refuted. First, we were not to be dependent on foreign countries; on the contrary, the whole aim of a wise statesman should be to make us as dependent as possible on foreign countries. He repeated, to make us as dependent as possible on foreign countries, in the full persuasion that foreign countries must then be dependent on us. So would the most beneficial intercourse between the nations of the world be established—so would friendly relations be maintained—so would the whole happiness of the human race be increased, and the unspeakable calamities of war be rendered of less probable occurrence. Then, said the hon. Gentleman, how could you get high taxation with low prices? The hon. Gentleman might far more reasonably have asked how could it be got without low prices of food? From what positive source did the hon. Gentleman suppose that taxation could be derived, except from the surplus income of the community?—from the profits of capital and the wages of labour, after defraying the cost of subsistence of the capitalist and the labourer? Under what circumstances did the hon. Gentleman think that surplus would be largest—when food was cheap, or when it was dear?—when the cost of subsistence was high, or when it was low? As an individual could best bear a burden on his finances when his necessary expenditure was lowest, so could a community best support taxation when food was the cheapest. But did this conclusion rest on theory alone? It was established by the unanswerable logic of facts. When two years ago he brought forward this question, he laid statements before the House, which he had really flattered himself would have prevented this fallacy, at least, from resuscitation. He had shown that the rise and fall of the revenue, and the rise and fall of the price of corn, had for twenty years been in an inverse ratio; that when corn rose the revenue declined, and that when there was a lower price of corn there was a flourishing revenue? In one part of the hon. Gentleman's speech—in a very eloquent peroration—the hon. Gentleman had talked of the flourishing condition of England under the Edwards and the Henrys; in another part he had said the people of England formerly lived on rye bread—the two passages were not very compatible—nor did he (Mr. Clay) exactly see how making wheaten bread cheap was to force the people to go back to rye. But let that pass. He would ask how it happened that the hon. Gentleman, who had paid much attention to this subject, should not recollect when it was, that the people of England began to substitute wheaten bread for rye? Could he be ignorant that the change took place, and the people began to live better, in the early part of the last century, much about the period when we were beginning to be a manufacturing country? Again, the hon. Gentleman said, that if we did permit the free importation of foreign corn, the growers would not take our manufactures in exchange—they would only take gold; he was really almost ashamed to reply to such an argument. How did the hon. Gentleman suppose we could get gold, except by sending our manufactured goods to the countries that produced it—in which case the increase of our trade by the repeal of the Corn-law would be equally secured? But, most extraordinary of all, the hon. Gentleman said, by way of explanation of the failure of the Corn-law to keep up steadily the price of corn, that it was never intended to sustain the price of corn; and again, that it had answered its object in respect of the fluctuation. How?—by preventing the price from ever rising very high or falling very low? No, but by protecting the consumer under high, and the grower under low prices. Why, in the name of common sense, if it were enacted neither to sustain the price of corn, nor to prevent fluctuation, for what was it enacted? To guard the British corn-grower against foreign competition, said the hon. Gentleman, and the noble Lord who spoke last seemed to be of the same opinion. But a protection against foreign competition which permitted wheat to fall to 36*s*., and a protection against high prices which permitted it to rise to 80*s*., was one of which he confessed he could not see the utility; and not a few of the interested parties would seem to have been of the same opinion with himself; for when wheat was at 36*s*., their Table groaned under the weight of petitions from agricultural districts, praying for more protection; and now the consumers of bread seemed to be as little satisfied with the protection they were enjoying. But was it not in truth notorious, that the main object of the bill of 1828 was to keep corn steadily at a price which it was supposed would remunerate the English growers? Was it not equally notorious, that in effecting that object the bill had utterly failed? The fluctuations since 1828 (not to mention the yet greater fluctuations under the law of 1815) had exceeded 100 per cent. In truth, it might be shown by reasoning, to which he believed no reply could be given, that the inevitable tendency of a protecting duty on corn was to cause fluctuation in price. He stated in 1837 the grounds on which that conclusion rests; but, as he was not aware that those grounds had ever been stated by others, and as the conclusion, if just, was of the highest importance, he would take the liberty of briefly re-stating the argument to the House. If you raise the price of corn in this country by preventing its influx from other countries, either by absolute prohibition, or by a duty so high as to be really prohibitory, you force an extended cultivation; because it is absolutely certain, that, in preference to all other occupations, as much capital will be devoted to the production of corn as can be employed with the ordinary rate of profit. This result is inevitable, for bread is an article of the first necessity—the consumption is less than of any thing else checked by high prices; the people suffer, but they must be fed, and they buy dear bread if they cannot get cheap. In ordinary years therefore you will, at a price above the level of other countries, produce enough, or very nearly enough, for the consumption of the community. But the growth which in years of average produce was enough, in abundant years is too much. You have a surplus of corn; that surplus can only find a market abroad, and must therefore fall to the price of foreign countries less the expense of transit, and, as at home, you cannot have two prices; the price of all the corn in the kingdom falls as much below the average price of other countries as you had attempted to raise it above. What is the effect of so great a fall? Why, that the farmer is ruined or discouraged—a less breadth of corn is sown—the smaller growth coincides with a less favourable season—the prices rise again above the level of other countries—wild hopes prevail again among the growers of corn—and you recommence your miserable cycle. The best chance for securing steadiness of price was in aiming to accomplish that which was also the most advantageous to the landholder, viz., that this shall be always an importing country. We have done as much as in us lay to render it absolutely certain, that it shall at intervals be an exporting country. You can by no possibility regularly maintain a price much above the level of other countries. Supposing even it were for your interest to do so, you can only produce that which you have produced—a ruinous fluctuation. But if the Corn-law failed in maintaining a price of corn above the level of other countries, was it on that account to be viewed as merely useless? On the contrary, he believed it to be fraught with evils of the very gravest kind to the best interests of the community, whether agricultural or commercial. On the evils with which it afflicted the agricultural interests he need not enlarge, as, if he were right in the view he had taken of its working, the prospect of protection it held out to the corn-grower was illusory, whilst its tendency to destroy agricultural capital was certain. But did it affect injuriously the commercial and manufacturing interests? In his opinion the dangers with which it threatened those great interests were of the most formidable kind. It was not his intention to go largely into this branch of the subject—it was the part of the question which had been most elaborately argued by his hon. Friend, whose statements, coming as they did from men deeply interested in ascertaining the facts of the case, were in a high degree worthy of the attention of the House. But whatever degree of credit the House might be disposed to give to those statements, there were, in his opinion, considerations, not dependent, or doubtful, or resting on disputed evidence, but resting on the admissions of the supporters of the present system, which were decisive against the propriety of maintaining it. The object of the Corn-law was greatly to limit at all times the importation of foreign corn, and under certain circumstances to stop it altogether—its uncontested effect was, from the uncertainty of admission into our market, to prevent corn being expressly grown for our use. But there is no one article produced by human skill and industry which will bear comparison with corn as a valuable object of commercial interchange between this and other countries—the demand for it would be larger than the demand for any other article, and the capability of its production is spread over a wider portion of the earth's surface. Other of our chief articles of import—such as sugar, spices, tobacco, tea, wine, are objects of luxury, rather than of necessity—they are the produce likewise of limited portions of the globe, and those mostly distant from our shores; corn, on the contrary, forming the staple of human subsistence, there is scarcely any limit to the demand—if it were at a price within the reach of the labouring classes, and a great demand for our manufactures and full employment consequently afforded them the means of purchase. How wide, too, were the regions, how vast the population, with which a free trade in corn would permit us to maintain a beneficial intercourse! There were few climates in which corn could not be produced, whilst it was almost the only staple which could be offered to us in exchange by countries, the vicinity of which, would render commercial intercourse the most beneficial, and with which it was most important to us to preserve friendly relations. Almost the whole of central and northern Europe, by soil and climate, was fitted for the production of corn — throughout the wide regions watered by the Elbe, the Weser, and the Vistula, corn may be grown with advantage and would be grown for our use, if we would permit its importation. And would this effect only be produced by destroying the growing manufactures of the countries with which this intercourse would take place? Must our increased prosperity be built upon the decay of our rivals? He had no such impression—he entertained no such wish. He had never said, for he had never thought, that the growth of foreign manufactures was wholly to be attributed to our Corn-laws. He had never said, that it would be stopped by the repeal of those laws. In as much only as the manufactures of continental Europe are forced into unnatural existence by our Corn-laws, in so much only would they be checked by their repeal. Those manufactures for which any natural facilities existed would thrive in spite of the freest competition with us; and far be it from him to wish that it should be otherwise. But did hon. Gentlemen imagine, that because we should not supplant our manufacturing rivals, or rather let him say our manufacturing brethren on the continent, that therefore we should find no market? Never could there be a more false assumption — with the new market we should afford for the produce of corn growing countries, new wants would arise which we should be called on to supply. The manufacturers of England would obtain a wider market; the manufacturers of the continent a more natural, and therefore a safer and better market. The manufacturers of each country would take the especial direction which the natural genius of the people and the peculiar aptitudes of soil and climate pointed out, and the result of the whole would be a vast increase of human happiness. The plough would turn more furrows in Silesia, in Poland, in Bohemia; the loom would be busier in Yorkshire, in Lancashire, and in Scotland. Our artizans would eat more bread; the German or Polish peasants would have better and cheaper raiment. It was at least clear, that as regarded the continent of Europe, our system of Corn-laws had shut us out from a wide field of beneficial enterprise—that it had converted friends into enemies, and customers into rivals. But a question of yet graver import, perhaps, remained. Did that system tend to render us less capable of competing with our manufacturing rivals in those markets where we met on equal terms? We have wilfully and designedly, by enacting these laws, shut ourselves out to a great extent from European markets. Have we, by the same enactment, endangered our transatlantic markets? Now, in considering this momentous question, let them again take only the admission of the supporters of the Corn-laws. The manufacturers say food is fifty per cent. cheaper on the continent than here; wages are consequently materially lower. At this disadvantage we cannot compete with our manufacturing rivals in American or Asiatic markets. The supporters of the Corn-laws, admitting, that food is cheaper abroad (as indeed they must, for it is their very proposition that it is good it should be so), reply yes; but your larger capital and greater skill, and the greater energy of our operatives, more than countervail this advantage, and it is not true, accordingly, that you cannot compete with the foreigner; and they refer us triumphantly to the increasing exports of manufactured goods. Now, in this view of the case, as stated by the parties respectively, there is one thing very remarkable, viz, the perfect coolness with which, on their own showing, the supporters of the Corn-laws would appropriate to their own profit, that which is not theirs, viz., the whole advantages accruing from the superiority of the British manufacturer. They say you can make a piece of calico for 50*s*., which costs the Swiss or German manufacturer 60*s*.; therefore you can give us the 10*s*. difference, and yet subsist If the price of provisions in both countries were equal, you, the British manufacturers, would divide the extra 10*s*. among you, in the shape of larger profits to the master and greater comforts to the operative, inasmuch as though wages might be something nominally lower, they would command more food; but you shall give the whole difference to the operative, in the shape of higher wages, and we will take it from him in the shape of higher-priced food. That was the case of the supporters of the Corn-laws as stated by themselves, and upon that statement alone he thought the manufacturing population would be entitled to demand the repeal of those laws. Up to this point the Corn-laws would seem only to be unjust; but would their effect cease here? Was not their injustice coupled, as in almost all cases, with the grossest folly—folly which would cause that injustice to be visited on the heads of its perpetrators? Could it be seriously believed that we should always retain that superiority of capital and skill which enabled us at present to make head against the disadvantage of dearer food? If we could rely on the assertion of those who ought best to know the fact, we are already losing it; but he required no evidence to convince him that we could not long retain it. Capital would flow to the region where profits were largest—skilful workmen will migrate to the land where their wages will procure for them the largest share of enjoyment. The difficulty of transferring manufacturing capital, and attachment to their native land on the part of our operatives, might retard this process, but its result was certain. It was no answer to this argument to say that our export of manufactured goods was increasing. The wants of the new world were so vast that without our aid they could not at present be supplied. But of this the House might be assured, as a result from which there was no escape, that if by maintaining the price of subsistence here greatly above the level of other manufacturing countries, they persisted in giving to the manufacturers of those countries a superiority of profit, they would at a period more or less remote see all our great staples transferred to other lands. The main feature of manufacturing industry as contradistinguished from agriculture was this—that, whereas in agriculture the highest cost of production governed the price of the produce of the soil in manufactures, the price of the article produced at the lowest cost governed the price of all similar articles. Wherever, therefore, any manufacture can be carried on at the least cost, there will be its ultimate seat—elsewhere it will languish and decay. When the time shall come, as come it must, that the capital and skill of foreign manufactures shall equal ours—one of two things must happen—either you must wholly lose your manufactures, or the wages of labour must subside to the level, or nearly so, of those paid by our foreign rivals. The natural advantages of England, in the possession of coal and iron for instance, and perhaps the native energy of her people, may always enable the capitalist to give somewhat higher wages here than elsewhere, but not to such an extent as to make up to the operative for any excessive difference in the price of food; and here he could not but advert to the monstrous doctrine that the labouring manufacturer had no interest in the repeal of the Corn-laws, inasmuch as if the price of food fell, wages would fall with it. That this opinion should be really and sincerely entertained by any persons—even by those whose humble station had afforded but little opportunity for mental training, was to him matter of surprise; but that it should find a voice within the walls of the House of Commons—above all, that it should find a supporter in the right hon. Baronet, the Member for Tamworth, as must be inferred from his speech on the motion for hearing evidence at the bar, was to him the subject of unbounded astonishment. This most extraordinary proposition rested on the assumption that the capitalist has some power over the wages of labour. Nothing can be more certain than that he has no such power. The price of labour is regulated wholly by the supply and demand. If there be an advantageous field for the employment of capital, and the master-manufacturer have many orders to execute, he will, in the fear of being outbid, give wages up to the very highest limit that will afford him a profit on his capital, and this he will do, however cheap may be the price of provisions. If, on the other hand, there be a limited field for the employment of capital, and the master manufacturers have but few orders to execute, there will be great competition among the workmen, and whatever be the price of food, they will bid against each other for employment, down to the point of starvation. To talk, therefore, of the effect of a free importation of corn—and consequent reduction in the price of food—being to reduce wages, is to betray an entire ignorance of the laws by which the price of labour is governed, to mistake the effect for the cause, and to confound the necessary order of events. Wages would not fall because the price of food fell, but because in the struggle on which we were entering with the foreign manufacturer wages must of necessity approximate to the foreign level. The repeal of the Corn-laws would mitigate to the English operative the effect of that struggle, possibly by giving a healthy impulse and just direction to the manufacturing industry as well of other countries as of this; it might be the means of averting that struggle altogether. The maintenance of the Corn-laws, on the contrary, would render that struggle inevitable, and anticipate and aggravate its worst evils. The tendency of those laws is to lower the wages of labour, and increase the price of food; the effect of their repeal would be to raise the rate of wages whilst it lowered the price of food. In conclusion, he would entreat of those hon. Gentlemen who more especially represented the landed interests in that House to consider well whether it were prudent to reject year after year such motions as the present. This counsel proceeded from no unfriendly adviser. No one, if he might be permitted to advert for one moment to himself, could have less personal or selfish interest in this question. Utterly unconnected now, whatever he might once have been, with either commerce or manufactures, he had no other interest in the settlement of this great question than inasmuch as his fortunes were mixed up with the fate and fortunes of the country. He would go further; he could say with perfect truth, that if there were one class in the prosperity of which, beyond all others, he should be disposed to take an interest, that class was the landed aristocracy of England. He believed the existence of such a class to be essential to the stability of the constitution—of that mild and tempered form of monarchy which beyond all other forms of Government was capable of combining the utmost extent of freedom, whether of person or opinion, with the supremacy of the laws, the security of property, and the highest degree of social refinement. But it was precisely because he thought so highly of the value of the landholders as a class, that he was alarmed at the pertinacity with which they clung to these useless—these worse than useless and disgraceful laws. "Look," said the hon. Gentleman, "at the advantages of the position in which you stand. Reflect whence those advantages are derived, and consider well whether by insisting on the maintenance of these laws, you do not place them all at hazard. The growth of the manufactures and commerce, and with them of the wealth and population of England, within the last three quarters of a century, is without a parallel in the history of nations—vast cities have grown up on barren heaths—every quarter of the land is filled with a thriving and wealthy population." Now, on what class of the British people does this unheard-of prosperity confer the greatest benefit? Beyond all doubt on the landholders. As proprietors of the soil of Britain you possess the greatest natural monopoly that the world ever saw. Every extension of trade, every advance of manufacturing skill, tends directly to your benefit. Every addition to the miraculous powers of the steam-engine, every improvement in the spinning-jenny or the power-loom—is an addition to the value of your estates. "*Vos sed non vobis,*" might almost be your language to the ingenious men by whom such improvements are effected; for the profits of any new invention can only be retained by the inventor until the knowledge of it is diffused; but if it add to the general health and population of the country its permanent benefit is yours. It would scarcely be possible to over-estimate the effect of the commercial and manufacturing prosperity of England in the value of English estates; he believed it would be stating it too low to say, that it had within a century quadrupled the rent and value. Did hon. Gentlemen know what was the value of good land in England a hundred years since? And what was its value now in the countries less auspicious to landholders than England? The rack-rent of good land in England a century back did not exceed 5*s.* per acre; and now, with some very rare and trifling exceptions, it did not amount to one half, or even a third of 5*s.* in any part of Continental Europe; indeed, over the greater part of Europe, as in the countries of the new world, rent could not be obtained, and the proprietor was forced to cultivate his own estates. To what circumstance could this difference of value be attributed, or why was an estate more valuable now than it was an hundred years ago in England, or than it now was in Silisia, or in Upper Canada? Could they imagine there was any other cause than the vast demand for every varied produce of the soil—not corn alone—which the wealth and population consequent on commerce and manufactures had created? It was well worthy of the observation of those who supposed that the rent of estates depended on keeping up the price of corn, that rent had risen altogether out of proportion to the price of corn; the average price of corn for the ten years since 1828 was 55*s.* 10*d.*, an advance of not more than 37 per cent. on the price of the fifty years at the end of the seventeenth and the beginning of last century, viz., from 1675 to 1725, which was 40*s.* 8*d.*; whilst rent had risen 300 per cent. What, then, was the obvious interest of the landholder? Above all things to protect, to preserve, to foster the commerce and manufactures of the country; but in maintaining the Corn-laws, as he had shown, by the admission of the supporters of those laws they cripple the growth and endanger ultimately the existence of those great interests. They limited the market for our manufactures in Europe, they endangered our possession of transatlantic markets. But higher considerations than such as could be drawn from appeals to the selfish interests of any class ought to influence the House in disposing of this question. Might not the continued existence of the Corn-laws tend greatly to enhance any danger to which our institutions were exposed, and to precipitate rash and ill advised change? Did they think, that the Corn-laws might be safely retained, because all classes of the people were not at present united in demanding the repeal?—because the great masses of the labouring population would not join in the agitation on this question? Why, he confessed their holding aloof was with him the very strongest reason for immediate concession. Had the House remarked why they would not join the middle classes in demanding the repeal of the Corn-laws? Was it that they approved of those laws—that they were even indifferent to their existence? On the contrary, one of the very first acts of a Parliament elected according to what was called the People's Charter would be the sweeping away of those laws; and they abstained, they said, from petitioning for the repeal, because, in a House constituted as was the present House of Commons, the success of such petitions was hopeless. Again, they said, If we refuse to join the middle classes in procuring the repeal of the Corn-laws they will join us in demanding the People's Charter. Let the House beware lest it make good this prophecy—lest, in the utter hopelessness of seeing justice done in this matter, it drove the middle to make common cause with the working classes, and to force on a change in our form of Government as the only means of ridding themselves of what they felt to be an intolerable oppression. Never yet in the history of this country had those classes combined without achieving the object at which they aimed. As yet the Members of that House had the time to prevent the alliance—as yet they might withdraw all the better portion even of the working classes, the honest and the well-intentioned, from the guidance of the visionary, the fanatic, the revolutionist, and the incendiary. But it was mainly by their conduct on this question that their faithfulness and competency as legislators would be tested. If they showed, that, although chiefly belonging to the landed aristocracy, they looked in legislating to the interests of the whole community, they might preserve our present form of representative Government. If, on the contrary they clearly showed, that they would regard only the interest or supposed interests of that class from which the representatives of the people of England have hitherto been taken—then, as he believed, some great convulsion must ensue, and perhaps at no very distant period, in which assuredly it would not be the Corn-laws only that would be swept away.

Mr. *Wodehouse* was perfectly convinced that the changes proposed by way of protection for agriculture were delusive, but he begged, at the same time to state, that if the present Corn-laws could not be shown, on a fair calculation, to be advantageous, not only to the landed interest, but to the commercial, manufacturing, and agricultural interests all combined, and to work well for the general good, he was ready to admit, that the sacrifice of the those laws ought to be made, though unquestionably, that sacrifice would be attended with heavy calamities. He maintained, however, that the law of 1828 had been most unfairly dealt with. At the introduction of that law, it was distinctly declared, that the object of it was to give increased facilities to import; and he ventured to assert, that that object had been attained. But when the President of the Board of Trade told the House, *quasi* Minister, that he rejoiced in agitation on the subject; and when another Cabinet Minister, the Secretary at War, declared, that if the present Corn-laws were maintained, public tranquillity was in danger — he asked whether those expressions, proceeding from Cabinet Ministers, did not hold out a premium to agitation? If outrages did not take place, such a result could not be owing to the wisdom displayed by the Executive Government on the occasion. The assertion, that foreign manufactures had increased in consequence of the British Corn-laws was an obvious fallacy. It was well known that the ruin of the manufacturing industry of England was one of the objects which Bonaparte had most at heart, and for this purpose he gave advantages to the provinces in the interior of Germany which he had conquered, and which he hoped by such means to retain under his dominion. The same sort of spirit was displayed by the King of Prussia, and, therefore, the argument could not be sustained, that our Corn-laws had been the cause of the increase of foreign manufactures. The House should always bear in mind that the rapidity with which British commerce gained an ascendancy in the world was without a parallel. In the short interval between the year 1794, when the action in the channel took place on the 1st of June, until the last action of Nelson at Trafalgar — a period scarcely exceeding ten years — every hostile navy was destroyed, and the facilities thus afforded to

British commerce led to an almost unlimited increase in the manufactures of the country. But it was not to be supposed by any man of common sense that advantages such as these could last for ever, and that, when peace was restored, foreigners would not begin to compete with British manufacturers. He was anxious to show, that the effect of the present Corn-laws had been misrepresented, not only in that House, but also out of it. In an address to British landowners, Earl Fitzwilliam, at whose instance the House of Lords was summoned to discuss the question of the Corn-laws to morrow—and at the rate at which they were going on it seemed likely, that the other House would be the first to come to a decision on the subject —in that address the noble Earl stated, that the object of the present law appeared to be to raise the price of corn to the level of 63*s*. or thereabouts. Now, he begged to say, that the act of 1828 had no such purpose, for it was distinctly declared in the course of the debate on the law, that if on a fair average of years the price of 60*s*. was maintained, every reasonable rent might be paid. The noble Losd proceeded to say, that the statistical documents of the Russian states acknowledged distinctly the injury which they experienced from the English Corn-laws, and it had become a proverb in Russia, that they manufactured wheat for England when England manufactured sugar and coffee for them, but that the Corn-laws had put an end to their manufacture of wheat, and, by the same blow had annihilated the manufacture of English sugar and coffee for Russia. The noble Earl next called upon his readers to examine calmly how the matter stood; and he stated, that for several years there had been little or no import of foreign corn for home consumption; that a moderate quantity had been constantly kept in bond, but that only a very small portion had been taken out for home consumption. Now, he wished, that that noble Lord, instead of consulting the statistical papers of Russia, had examined the official documents belonging to his own country. If he had done so, he would not, perhaps, have made the assertion, that there had been little or no import of foreign corn for home consumption. On referring to the Lords report of 1836, to which was appended an account of foreign grain brought into consumption from 1815 to 1835, he found, that during the first ten years, the quantity of foreign grain brought into consumption amounted to 7,000,000 quarters; but that in the last ten years of the period which, of course, excluded the years 1836, 1837, and 1838, the quantity equalled 13,000,000 quarters. He did not think, that any Gentleman would deny, that agriculture might fairly be considered as one of the great sinews of the national strength, and it was under the confidence which the British grower now enjoyed that agriculture had prospered, and he trusted, that no vote would be come to, the effect of which must be to to shake, if not entirely destroy, that confidence. He contended, that it was impossible to conclude merely from the price of corn what would be the tendency to import. It could be shown, that Ireland, during the six years from 1819 to 1824, when the price of wheat was between 50*s*. and 60*s*., exported to England considerably more wheat than she did in the preceding twenty years, when the price ranged from 80*s*. to 90*s*. on the average. He, therefore, thought it incumbent on Parliament to encourage the cultivation of the arable land of this country. The hon. Member for the Tower Hamlets had referred to the year 1795, but that was a year of great pressure, arising from scarcity, though the pressure had been mitigated by the extraordinary activity of the Government, at the head of which was Mr. Pitt. The next instance of a period of scarcity to which the hon. Member had also referred was in 1801; and he wondered, that the conduct of the King of Prussia at that time seemed to have escaped from the memory of the hon. Gentleman. The King of Prussia took that opportunity of imposing a duty on the export of corn, and when the merchants remonstrated against the measure, he told them plainly that i was their own fault that they had not sent their corn to England before; and that as long as the price in England remained high he should keep up the export duty, but that he would lower it if the price in England fell. It had been contended, that any danger arising to this country from a dependence on foreign corn was merely chimerical; but let him ask what had been the case when the navigation of the Baltic fell under the dominion of France, from 1806 to 1813? It might be shown, that on the average of those eight years (omitting from the calculation the year 1808, when a large import, amounting to above 1,000,000 quarters, was admitted into this country by the special connivance of Bonaparte, who allowed his generals to turn smugglers and contraband dealers in wheat)—the import was little or none. The average import of wheat and other grain, including the year 1808, was only 300,000 quarters; and excluding that year, only 150,000 quarters. Now, he asked, what would have been the condition of this country if the heart of agriculture at home had not been maintained? During those eight years, the people of this country were sustained by their own agriculture, though there was no impediment in the way of importation. It was a peculiar circumstance, too, that the year 1811 was a year of dearth, not only in this country, but also throughout Europe; and he, therefore, apprehended, that the idea of danger to this country from a dependence on other nations for the means of subsistence, was not wholly chimerical. He had referred particularly to the year 1811, because it was a year of peculiar character, and was distinguished by the passing of the Orders in Council. Now, a very few years ago he remembered having had a conversation with a person of considerable authority on subjects of this nature, who was formerly a Member of that House—he meant Mr. Frankland Lewis. The conversation to which he alluded related to the New Poor-law, and Mr. Frankland Lewis asked him how he thought it would work. He (Mr. Wodehouse) said, that he thought it would ultimately work well; but that he feared it might be accompanied in the first place with a stagnation of employment. Mr. Frankland Lewis's reply was, "Stagnation of employment! Why, who can suppose it possible that a stagnation of employment can occur in less than seven years?" Now, it so happened, that stagnation of employment did occur in less than seven months after that conversation, and when he reminded Mr. F. Lewis of his observation, that gentleman said, "True, but then there was the crisis in America." He admitted, that there was a crisis in America, but we might also have a crisis elsewhere. We might have a crisis in France—we might have a crisis in India, and in other parts of the world; and when the manufacturing population became discontented, they would find their difficulties increased tenfold, with a scarcity of subsistence as well as a scarcity of employment. Upon these grounds he should decidedly oppose the motion.

Viscount *Howick*[*] spoke as follows:—Sir, I can assure the hon. Member who has just sat down (Mr. Wodehouse), that I give the fullest credit to the assertion with which he concluded his speech, that if he were satisfied that the existing Corn-law were really injurious to the community at large, he would offer no opposition to its repeal, however severe might be the sacrifice which such a measure would involve of the interest of the owners of land. I am convinced that this is the real feeling both of the hon. Gentleman and of the great body of the landed proprietors of this country, and I cannot, therefore, refrain from observing that, though I have perceived with satisfaction, during the course of this debate, a great improvement in the tone of those who have advocated a repeal of the Corn-laws, and much less of imputation upon the motives of their opponents, than we have heard upon former occasions, still, I do think, that the Gentlemen connected with the landed interest have great right to complain of the manner in which, out of doors, they have been represented, as resisting any change in the Corn-law, from the most sordid and selfish motives; as obstinately maintaining a system which they are well aware is deeply injurious to the nation at large, for the sake of their own personal advantage, totally regardless of the sufferings they thus impose upon others. I must say, that I consider this to be a most unjust accusation against the landed interest. I think, indeed, that those connected with this interest are much mistaken in clinging to what is called the protective system, but we ought not to forget that if this is an error, it is one sanctioned and countenanced by the whole course of our policy and legislation up to a very recent period; the exclusion from our market of every article which could compete with the productions of our domestic industry was, for 200 years, the principle universally acted upon, and so little is it true that the principle of protection has been applied by the landed interest for their own exclusive benefit, that, as was truly observed last night by the hon. Member for the North Riding of Yorkshire (Mr. Cayley), they have passed a great number of laws imposing high protecting duties upon many articles of which they are themselves the principal consumers. It is only within a very few years that even an approach has been made to a system of greater commercial liberality, and we must not forget that, till very lately indeed, a great majority of those very persons who now charge the landed proprietors with such extreme selfishness for maintaining the principle of protection with regard to corn, themselves insisted upon adhering to the very same principle in respect of those manufactures in which their own interests were concerned. Surely, then, it is most unfair to ascribe to nothing but selfish and sordid motives, the refusal of the landed proprietors at once to abandon a system which had so long been approved by all parties, and more particularly by those who are now most clamorous for a change.

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[*] From a corrected report, published by Ridgway.

But, Sir, though I think the Gentlemen connected with the landed interest have been most unfairly and unjustly attacked, I trust they will not suffer these attacks to have the effect of preventing them from giving their calm and deliberate consideration to this momentous question; I hope that the hostile spirit in which a change of the existing law has too frequently been demanded, will not lead them hastily to conclude that such a measure must necessarily be injurious to them, or that it must be supported for the purpose of being so. I must beg leave to remind them, that, in advocating a change of the existing law, I at least cannot be suspected of any views or feelings hostile to the landed interest. I have the honour of representing the northern division of Northumberland, a district exclusively agricultural, and I believe I may confidently assert, that no county in the kingdom stands before it for the skill, the energy, and the success with which its inhabitants have prosecuted this great branch of national industry. That influence, therefore, which the wishes and interests of our constituents always have, and ought to have, upon the views of their Representatives, must dispose me to wish well to agriculture, and certainly my personal interests are not less deeply involved in its prosperity. I must be supposed to be worse than insane by any Gentleman who can imagine that I am actuated by any feeling of hostility, or even of indifference, towards the landed interest. I may be wrong in my judgment, but, in forming it, I certainly have not been influenced by any sinister interest; I may be mistaken, but at least the opinion which I entertain has been formed without bias, upon much consideration of this momentous subject, and has been confirmed by my observation of what has actually been the effect of the existing law.

Sir, I consider this as a question which ought to be judged of far more by experience than by mere abstract reasoning. I wish, therefore, to bring it practically to the test of experience; to look back at what has occurred since the law of 1828 was passed, and to compare the results by which it has been followed with the anticipations of those by whom that measure was recommended to the adoption of Parliament.

Now, Sir, what were the grounds upon which it was so recommended to us?—The first consideration which was urged, and that which was most strongly pressed by the advocates of the measure, was, that it would ensure great steadiness in the price of corn. The hon. Member for the North Riding of Yorkshire (Mr. Cayley) denied that the law was expected to produce this effect; he asserted, that no Corn-law could possibly ensure steadiness of prices, and that we had no right to look for impossibilities. I confess I was surprised to hear this statement, which certainly is by no means in accordance with the arguments advanced by the proposers of the present law, at the time it was brought forward. My right hon. Friend (Mr. P. Thomson) last night quoted the language of Mr. Canning, who said, that he expected as a consequence of the measure, that the price of wheat would range from *55s.* to *65s.* a quarter. All the most distinguished advocates of the plan expressed a similar opinion; and, more than this, I find that when the law had been nearly five years in operation, Lord Ashburton, then Mr. Baring, on the occasion of a motion brought forward by Mr. W. Whitmore, on the 17th of May, 1833, expressed his conviction that the law was not only intended to ensure great steadiness of price, but that it had actually succeeded in doing so. The following is an extract from his speech upon that occasion:—

> "I know it has been stated that prices have fluctuated between 52*s.* and 71*s.* during the last five years; but these must be extreme points, and I am sure that if the price ever reached 71*s.* it was only for a short time. Every body connected with agriculture knows that the price has continued steadily at about 60*s.*—sometimes a little higher, sometimes a little lower."

Let me ask how this confident prediction of Lord Ashburton's has been realised? Is it true, that the price of corn has not fallen below 52*s.*, and that if it has reached 71*s.*, this must have been its extreme point, and one at which it would be maintained only for a very short time? On the contrary, the average price of wheat for the whole year, 1834, was only 45*s.* 11*d.*; for the year 1835, it was 39*s.* 5*d.*, and at one time, at the close of the same year, it was as low as 36*s.* a quarter; on the other hand, instead of 71*s.* being, as Lord Ashbuton stated, the extreme rise which would ever take place, and a price only to be sustained for a very short time; the fact is, that the average of the whole period, from the month of August last, to the present time, has been 72*s.* 8*d.*, and in the month of January, the average of one week was as high as 81*s.* 7*d.*

Then, Sir, the next effect the law was to have, was that of making the trade in foreign corn equable and steady, instead of our being exposed to what Mr. Canning described as an alternate deluge and drought. But what has been the effect of the law in this respect? Instead of a regular and moderate influx of foreign corn, for six years the entries for home consumption were reduced almost to nothing; and then again, in a single week, nearly a million and a half of quarters were entered at a nominal duty. We were also told that the measure was to cause the capital of the country to be employed in dealing in British, rather than in foreign corn; and here again the result has been precisely the opposite of that which we were taught to expect. Lastly, we were told, that by the operation of the law, the consumer on the one hand and the farmer on the other, were to be effectually protected from the distress to which these classes are exposed from very high or from very low prices. Instead of this, we know that the great body of our population are at this moment, suffering most severely from the high price of food, while the extent of the distress to which farmers have been exposed from the opposite extreme of low prices in many of the years which have elapsed since the passing of the existing Corn-law, is too well known to admit of dispute. I hold in my hand a record of this distress, in extracts from speeches delivered from the throne, which I will refrain from reading to the House, as they were last night quoted by my right hon. Friend. But there is one description which has been given of this distress of greater authority even than theses speeches, inasmuch as it was founded upon a careful examination of evidence, with which I must be permitted to trouble you. The report of the committee upon agricultural distress, of 1833, contained the following passage—

> "The committee of 1821 expressed a hope 'that the great body of the occupiers of the soil, either from the savings of more prosperous times, or from the credit which punctuality commands in this country, possess resources which will enable them to surmount the difficulties under which they now labour.' Your committee, with deep regret, are bound rather to express a fear that the difficulties alone remain unchanged, but that the savings are either gone or greatly diminished, the credit failing, and the resources being generally exhausted; and this opinion is formed, not on the evidence of rent-payers, but of many most respectable witnesses, as well owners of land, as surveyors and land agents."

Sir, I think the advocates of the existing Corn-law can hardly deny the accuracy of the statement I have now made,—they can neither controvert the facts, nor dispute the wide difference between these results, and those which we were assured in 1828, would follow from our passing the bill which was proposed to us. It is possible they may be able to account for what has happened; they may be able to shew, that without this law, we should have been in a worse situation than we actually have, and that its provisions have, in no degree, tended to produce that alternate distress of the farmer and the consumer, which we have witnessed: they may be able to do this, but, at all events I think they must admit, that in all fairness of reasoning it is incumbent upon them to do so; that at first sight, at least, there is an apparent failure of the law to produce the effect anticipated, which it is necessary for them to account for. But, though several Gentlemen, advocating the the maintenance of the existing Corn-law, have entered most elaborately into the whole question, they have one and all avoided touching upon this point, the right hon. Baronet in particular, who spoke last night (Sir E. Knatchbull), having been challenged by my right hon. Friend near me, to account for the difficulties to which the landed interest had been exposed, had only this answer to make, that the agricultural committees of 1833 and 1836, had not attributed the distress of the agriculturists to the existing Corn-law. This is perfectly true. But the right hon. Baronet must remember, that in the committee of 1836, the draft of a report was prepared by my hon. Friend, the chairman, (Mr. Lefevre), in which an alteration of the existing Corn-law was recommended, and, although this draft was rejected at a meeting of the committee, where, if I mistake not, seventeen out of twenty-three gentlemen who were present, were connected with the landed interest,—no attempt even was made to assign any other cause by which the then existing distress of the agriculturists could be accounted for.

I think then, that, as the advocates of the law have shrunk from the attempt to reconcile the apparent contradiction between that which has actually taken place since it has been in force, with the predications of its authors, this circumstance alone, in all fair reasoning, would justify us in pronouncing that it has failed. But, Sir, I am prepared to go further; I think it can be clearly shewn, not only that the Corn-law has failed to avert the inconvenience which has been occasioned by the great fluctuations in the price of corn during the last ten years, but that it has greatly aggravated, if it has not produced, this evil. I think that we can trace, by a reference to facts, the operation of the law, both in further depressing the price of corn at the time when from favourable harvests, it must at all events have been low, and also in still further increasing the dearth which the present deficiency has produced.

In the first place, I will endeavour to show how it is, that, at the present moment, the inconvenience occasioned by high prices is increased by the provisions ofthe law. We know that the chief argument in favour of the fluctuating duty, was, that in case of a deficiency of our home-supply, it would enable the consumer to obtain foreign corn unburthened by any duty, and thus give him all the benefit of a free-trade in Corn. Now, this argument is obviously founded upon the assumption, that there is always to be found abroad an unlimited supply of foreign corn, ready to flow into this country whenever it is wanted, if we are willing to receive it. This assumption is utterly unfounded. Corn can no more be grown in foreign countries than it can here, except to meet an anticipated demand; and if it is grown upon the expectation of a demand which does not arise, the consequence must be, an extreme depression of its price, and great distress amongst the agricultural classes. But the effect of our fluctuating duty, is, to render it matter of extreme uncertainty whether the foreign grower can calculate upon a demand from this country or not. In the first five years, which followed the passing of the law, there was so high a range of prices, that the ports were never closed for any long period together, and the whole amount of foreign wheat, entered for home-consumption, was no less than 5,725,000 quarters; but, in the six following years, up to last harvest, the averages were constantly so low, that the duty was always kept above the rate which would admit of any profitable importation. What must have been the necessary consequence of these changes? The supply required in the first five years, must have created abroad an expectation of a demand in this country, and, when afterwards the ports were practically closed for so long as six years, it is impossible that the want of the anticipated market should not have occasioned very great distress to the cultivators and dealers in corn in other countries.

From reasoning, we may conclude, that such must have been the case, nor would it be difficult to produce evidence that it really was so. I hold in my hand a document, which I will not trouble the House by reading, which shows what was the effect abroad of the state of things I have described. It is an extract from a Hamburgh newspaper, of the year 1836, stating in much detail, the inconvenience occasioned to the holders of corn in that port, from the length of time for which they had in vain waited for a demand in this country, and strongly recommending that other channels of trade should be sought for, abandoning all idea of deriving any benefit from the corn trade with England under our present system.

The landholders in those parts of Poland, whence, in previous years supplies had been drawn for our market, are stated to have experienced very great difficulties, in consequence of the extreme depression of the price of their produce. But it was, of course, impossible that the foreign merchants or growers should long persist in a losing trade, the unnaturally low price of grain, occasioned by the glut arising from the failure of an expected market in this country, could not, therefore, be of long continuance. But I must observe in passing, that while it lasted, this state of things must have acted as a premium to our foreign competitors in manufactures. The unnaturally low price of food must have had all the effect of a bounty upon the productions of the foreign manufacturer, and though it is true that this is an advantage, he could not long enjoy it,—we know that the first moment of entering upon the field of competition with an established trade, is always that of the greatest difficulty; so that the effect of our fluctuating duty must have been to help our rivals through the critical period of first getting up their infant manufactures. I do not, however, wish to dwell upon this part of the subject, which has already been sufficiently noticed by preceding speakers. I wish rather to point out that the effect of the long closing of our ports must necessarily have been to compel the foreign growers gradually to abandon our markets, and to cause new channels of trade to be opened, so that when we were again in the last autumn in want of a supply from abroad, we could not expect any preparation to have been made for meeting a demand which had been so long interrupted.

Under such circumstances, it was in vain that, with the rise of the averages, we had a reduction of the duty upon foreign corn; this was now too late to be of any real service to the consumer. The sudden opening of our ports, no supply having been raised in foreign countries in anticipation of such an occurrence, produced a great rise in the prices of wheat abroad. The unexpected demand of so rich and populous a country, in a season of defective production at home, coming upon the European market without any preparation, had necessarily a very powerful effect in raising prices generally, and thus both depriving our own consumers of the benefit which it was anticipated they would derive from the opening of the ports at a nominal duty, and producing much inconvenience to the consumers of those countries from which we draw our supplies.

A regular and constant trade in corn with this kingdom would be of inestimable advantage to the great agricultural countries of Europe; a supply would be created to meet the anticipated demand, and the intercourse would be mutually beneficial to both parties; but the case is widely different when, under the existing law, a demand arises from a deficiency of our own harvests, and our ports are, consequently, opened. The supply we require can then only be obtained by drawing upon that which foreign countries raise for their own consumption. Our superior wealth enables us to do this; we can afford to pay a price for wheat which attracts it from all quarters; but, in doing so, it necessarily also raises the price abroad far above its ordinary level. So sudden an increase in the price of food cannot take place without inflicting very great distress upon the foreign consumer, and thus the capricious and the irregular admission of foreign corn into our markets becomes almost as great a nuisance to the countries from which it is drawn, as our at other times refusing to receive the produce which has been raised in expectation of our demand. The hon. Member for Lincolnshire (Mr. Christopher), adverted to the riots which lately took place in some ports of France, to prevent the shipping of corn to this country, as an illustration of the danger to which we should be exposed, by making ourselves dependent upon other countries for a supply of food. In my opinion, it would have been impossible to have adduced a stronger proof of the very dangerous dependence upon foreign countries to which we are now exposed. I confess that I am in no degree astonished at the conduct of the French populace, or of the French Government, in this matter: what has occurred is the natural consequence of our own legislation. If we refuse to conduct a regular trade in corn with foreign nations, and thus prevent them from growing a supply for our market, is it to be supposed that, when the supply is defective, and when the people of other countries are suffering from the high price of the chief article of subsistence, it will in such a time of general scarcity be endured that England should come forward, and, by her superior wealth, run up their prices, already high, 100 or 200 per cent. above the level of ordinary years? Such a system would be intolerable to other nations, for the prices, so raised by the superior wealth of England, would be famine prices to the people of other countries. I contend, therefore, that the effect of the existing law is to raise up difficulties in the way of our obtaining a supply in the time of our utmost need. The House will do well to recollect that we are, at this moment, shut out from the grain market of a very extensive part of the Continent. If I am not greatly mistaken, corn is not now permitted to be shipped for England, from any of the ports of the northern and western coasts of France, from those of Belgium, and of the greater part of Italy, including the Austrian dominions in that country, the territory of the Pope, and the kingdom of Naples. From none of these places is the exportation of corn to England now allowed, and the prohibition is, in my opinion, the direct and natural consequence of our own law.

But, independently of the interference of foreign governments to prohibit the exportation of corn, and of the insufficiency of the supply provided to meet an unexpected demand, the existing law further operates to raise to the consumers the price of foreign corn when it is wanted, by the extreme uncertainty and hazard which it produces in carrying on the trade in corn. When the duty, after having been for a long period, at a very high rate, falls by a rise of the averages to one that is merely nominal, there is always the greatest doubt how long it may remain at this amount, and consequently there is a sort of struggle amongst speculators, to enter for home consumption, the largest possible quantity in the shortest possible time. Owing to this, freight (there being an urgent demand for it,) rises to an unusual price, and all the other charges of importation are increased in a similar manner. The holders of corn, knowing that time is all important to the speculators, and that, therefore, the competition of corn which has to be brought from a greater distance can have little effect, are enabled to insist upon higher prices than they could otherwise obtain. Upon this point, I confess I was surprised to hear one of the advocates of the existing law, gravely quote as a proof of the advantages of the system, a letter from the Continent, in which it is asserted that some of the Prussian merchants were anxious for the continuance of our Corn-law, because it enabled them, whenever our ports opened, to realise higher prices than they could otherwise obtain. No doubt such is the effect of our system of duties, but, however advantageous it may be in these cases to the Prussian merchants to be relieved from all effective competition, from those of Odessa, or other distant markets, and to be thus enabled to insist upon higher prices than they could otherwise expect; surely this is any thing but an advantage to the consumer in this country, by whom these higher prices have to be paid.

It is true, that, with such a deficiency as we have this year experienced, supplies are obtained from Odessa, and other distant places, but in importing from these quarters, the merchant is exposed to the risk of having the duty again raised, before he can bring his cargoes into the market, and for this danger he must, of course, be compensated by an additional profit, if the adventure should succeed. Thus the uncertainty of the continuance of the low rate of duty raises the price of foreign corn to the consumer, whether that corn has to be brought from a distance, or can at once be entered for home consumption, because, in the latter case, the holder is not exposed to effective competition, and because in the former, the merchant, though he may buy cheap, incurs so much risk that he cannot venture to carry on the trade, except with a view to high profits.

Nor is this the whole extent of the burthen, thrown upon the consumer, by the uncertainty in the trade, occasioned by our varying duties. It is a principle so clear, that, but for some of the very extraordinary arguments and doctrines, put forward by the supporters of the Corn-law during this debate, I should hardly have thought it necessary to state it, that no trade can be carried on, for a series of years, to a loss; if in any particular branch of commerce, great losses are at times experienced, they must, of necessity, be compensated by corresponding profits at other times, or the trade must clearly be abandoned. Hence it becomes a point of much importance, to ascertain the extent of the losses sustained by speculators in corn, during the period that a prohibitory rate of duty was maintained, since these losses, must, sooner or later, be made good by the consumer. If we can discover the amount of loss, incurred while the ports remained closed, we shall be able to judge in some degree, what must have been the additional charge thrown upon the consumer, when the averages rose so as to allow of the admission of foreign corn at the low duty.

One of the witnesses examined by the Agricultural Committee of 1836, estimated the losses which had even then been incurred in this way, in the few preceeding years at not less than 3,000,000*l*. I have every reason to believe that this is no exaggerated calculation, but as hon. Members opposite may not be inclined to attach the same credit that I do myself to a general estimate, of which the particular grounds have not been stated, I have endeavoured to ascertain from data, which can hardly be disputed, what may be considered the lowest amount of expense which must have been incurred in holding foreign corn in bond in this country during the six years preceding the last harvest. It is obvious, that this expense can form only a very small part of the losses incurred in the trade in foreign corn for our market; many other very heavy items of loss would still remain to be ascertained, but without reference to these I am anxious to show to the House, how very large an expense must been incurred by the importers, during the time that the high rates of duty were maintained, under the single head of keeping foreign corn in bond in the ports of this country. With a view to calculate the amount of this expense, I have obtained a statement, shewing the quantity of foreign wheat imported, the quantity taken out of bond, and the quantity remaining in bond, at the end of each half year, from the 5th January, 1833, to the 5th July, 1837. From this statement, it appears, that there were 507,764 quarters of foreign wheat in bond, on the 5th January, 1833, and that in the nine following half years, to the 5th July, 1837, there were imported, 611,749 quarters more, making in all 1,129,513 quarters, which had passed through the bonding warehouses during the period in question. Of this quantity there were taken out of bond, during the same time, 545,079 quarters, and as the duty in these years, was constantly at a prohibiting rate, and only the small quantity of 6,472 quarters, were consequently entered for home consumption, the wheat taken out of bond must have been for re-exportation, except that which was destroyed, a mode of disposing of wheat that had been kept a long time in the warehouses, which the return moved for, by my hon. Friend, the Member for Leeds (Mr. Baines,) shews, in some cases, at least, to have been adopted. Whether re-exported or destroyed, it is obvious that no profit whatever could have been obtained by the importers, to make up for even a part of the expenses incurred in warehousing that corn to which I now refer, on the contrary, an additional and very considerable loss must have been incurred in disposing of it, beyond the charge of keeping it in bond. But confining my attention to the amount of this last charge, I find that the length of time for which the wheat thus unprofitably taken out of bond, must have been in warehouse, was, upon an average, 47½ months. I arrive at this result, by assuming, that the corn, first imported, was always that first taken out of bond, of course this would not be really the case, but in calculating the average time, that the whole remained in bond, no error can result from the assumption, since if some parcels of corn would be taken, as having been longer in warehouse than they really had, others would be in consequence, taken as having been so for too short a time, and the average obtained, will, therefore, be correct.

The cost of keeping corn in warehouse has, I find, been very variously estimated; the highest calculation I have seen, is 10*s*. a quarter annually, and the lowest 5*s*., and I am led to believe, that in taking it at 6*s*., I am not exceeding the truth. Upon this calculation, the actual charge for keeping in warehouse, 545,079 quarters of wheat; for an average time of 47½ months, will amount to 649,474*l*., and in the 4½ years, in which our markets were entirely closed against the admission of foreign grain, a loss to that extent must have been incurred by the importers, under this single head of expense. But of the 1,129,513 quarters of foreign corn, which, as I have said, had been at different times in warehouse during these years, there still remained in bond, on the 5th of July 1837, 584,434 quarters; of this quantity, about two-thirds were entered for home consumption, some at a high rate of duty in the following half year, and the remainder in the course of the last autumn; upon the same principle of calculation as before, I find that the average period for which it had been in bond, before it was taken out, to have been nearly 30 months, at an expense of 419,762*l.*, making a total charge incurred in keeping in bond, the 1,129,513 quarters, which had been imported during the time our ports were closed, of no less a sum than 1,066,236*l.* or about 19*s.* a quarter.

Sir, I am aware it may be said, that so far as regards that portion of this wheat, which was eventually entered for home consumption, at a low rate of duty, the calculation I have just made is fallacious, in as much as under any mode of conducting the corn trade, wheat imported, must be kept very frequently for considerable periods in warehouse, and the charge so incurred upon this part of what was imported before July 1837, cannot therefore be regarded as a loss occasioned by the existing law. I am not disposed to deny altogether the force of this answer, I am aware that the whole expense of keeping this wheat in warehouse, cannot fairly be attributed to the operation of the law, but far the larger part of it undoubtedly must be so, and against the amount, whatever it may be, by which I may have over-estimated the loss incurred under this head, there has to be set all the very much heavier loss which must have been thrown upon the importers, by being compelled at a great sacrifice to dispose of the very considerable quantity of wheat, which, I have shewn, they were compelled to re-export, and some of it actually to destroy. When it is considered that I have allowed nothing for any loss of that kind, or for that sustained upon corn warehoused in foreign ports, on account of English capitalists, though I have reason to know that there were considerable stocks of wheat held at a very serious expense in some of the foreign ports of exportation, it seems to me impossible to doubt that the loss incurred by the dealers in foreign corn since 1833, must far have exceeded the sum of 1,066,236*l.* at which I have calculated it,

I will, however, take it at this amount only, and I contend, that in seeking to ascertain what is the direct charge which has been imposed upon the British consumer of foreign corn, by the existing law, we may fairly assume, (upon the principle, that the loss incurred in the trade at one time, must be compensated by a corresponding profit at another) that this sum, together with the actual amount of duty received, must have been repaid by the increased price put upon foreign corn, admitted for home consumption. But the amount of duty received upon foreign corn, in the last two years, has been 439,963*l.* which, added to the loss I have calculated at 1,066,236*l.*, will give a sum of 1,506,199*l.* as the whole direct charge upon the foreign wheat admitted for home consumption, since July 1837, and, as the number of quarters entered for consumption, from that time, to the 5th January 1839, has been 1,941,990, the impost cannot be considered at less than 15*s.* 6*d.* a quarter, in addition to the further and very heavy tax which we have had to pay, in the shape of increased price to the foreign holder of corn, and of increased charges for importation, arising from the uncertainty of our system, in the manner I have already shewn.

There is another mode of estimating the charge, which the existing law has thrown upon the country, under the circumstances of the last season, notwithstanding its having admitted of the importation of a considerable quantity of foreign corn, at a nominal rate of duty.

It is now about six months, since the deficiency of our home supply of wheat became apparent and produced a considerable rise of price; in September, the averages attained the point at which the duty is reduced to its lowest amount, yet in consequence of the restricted supply obtainable from abroad, the importations were only able to lower the price of wheat for a short time; the temporary fall which followed the entry of a considerable quantity of foreign wheat, was soon more than recovered, and the average price of the last six months has been about 72*s.* Now, Sir, it is, I think, quite impossible to suppose, that so high a price could have been maintained for so long a time, under a different system of Corn-laws, and if we assume, that while the 1*s.* duty has been generally chargeable, the want of a more abundant supply of foreign wheat, has raised our market prices only 5*s.* a quarter beyond the rate, which, under a more certain system, might have been expected to prevail, I am convinced, that we shall very greatly indeed under estimate the amount of the burthen thrown upon the consumers of wheat, in one of those periods of scarcity, during which it was the great argument of the advocates of the law, that by the contrivance of the varying scale of duties, we should enjoy all the benefits of a practically free trade. But, as the annual consumption of wheat in this country, is estimated at from 12 to 14 millions of quarters, it will follow, that, at the lowest calculation, an addition of *5s.* a quarter, to the price of wheat, during six months, must have been equivalent to a tax levied upon the consumers, of no less a sum than 1,500,000*l.*

These considerations seem, to me, clearly to establish the conclusion that the relief which it was supposed the consumer would derive, from the reduction of the duties upon foreign corn by means of the varying scale, has been proved by experience, to be altogether fallacious and imaginary; we impose on the contrary, as heavy, or rather, a much heavier burthen upon the country, than if we levied a high fixed duty upon Corn, the only difference is, that while we impose the burthen, we carefully contrive to do it in such a manner, as to bring in no revenue to the State. Surely this can hardly be defended as a wise arrangement; it may perhaps be true, as I have heard some Gentlemen assert, that we ought not to levy a revenue by a tax upon the food of the people, but the objection to such a tax is surely not the revenue it brings in, but the burthen it imposes, and if we are required to submit to the burthen, we should at least take care, that we do not lose the revenue; I cannot, therefore, regard it as otherwise, than a decisive objection to the existing law, that it imposes a charge upon the country, at least as severe as a fixed duty, which in the last few months, would have brought in 1,000,000*l*, or 1,200,000*l.* to the Exchequer, while it has been comparatively unproductive of revenue. Can we regard it as otherwise than a most improvident and thriftless waste of the resources of the country, to throw away so large a sum which might have been realized and applied towards the reduction of some of our other burthens, without throwing the slightest additional charge upon the people?

Sir, I will now proceed to that which I consider a yet more important branch of my argument, and I will endeavour to shew, that if in a time of scarcity our fluctuating duty presses heavily upon the consumer, in periods of abundance, it has pressed no less heavily upon the farmer; in the one case it enhances the too high prices, and aggravates the difficulties of such a season as the last; in the other, it increases to a degree absolutely ruinous to the producer, that fall of prices which an unusual plenty must at all times occasion. The very fact, that in unproductive years, our Corn-law, as I have endeavoured to shew, restricts our supply from abroad, and thus enhances the price of wheat in the home market, must, of necessity, produce the opposite effect upon a recurrence of seasons of a contrary description, from the unnatural stimulus which the high prices must give to an increased growth of wheat. The first four or five years after the passing of the Act of 1828, we required from the deficiency of our own crops a considerable supply of wheat from abroad, and, under these circumstances, the effect of the law was undoubtedly both to raise the prices of wheat higher than they otherwise have been, and to inspire the producers with false hopes, that these prices would be maintained. A powerful stimulus was thus given to the increased cultivation of wheat, and favourable harvests having followed, there was a redundant supply, which produced the great depression of prices and agricultural distress, which were so severely felt from 1833 to 1836. I am aware, that this statement is not in accordance with that made by the Agricultural Committee of 1833; in the report of that Committee, it is asserted, that the produce of wheat in this kingdom had fallen off rather than increased since 1821. Sir, I should not have the presumption to ask the House to prefer my authority to that of the Committee, but the authority of facts is before either, and this is in favour of the statement I have made. In 1821, it was shewn, that upon an average of years we did not at that time produce as much wheat as sufficed for our own consumption; but from the harvest of 1832 our consumption was, for six years, almost entirely supplied by our own produce, the amount of foreign corn entered for home consumption, during that time, having been too trifling to deserve notice. Yet, between 1821 and 1831 our population had increased from 21,193,000 to 24,271,000, and the consumption between 1833 and 1836, was augmented far more than in proportion to the increased population, owing to the cheapness of corn, and to the high wages, which, from the commercial prosperity that prevailed during the greater part of the period, were paid in the manufacturing districts. It is notorious also, that wheat, in consequence of its very low price, and the comparatively less abundant supplies of other sorts of grain, was used to a considerable extent for malting, and also for feeding cattle and sheep. This immensely increased consumption, which, for six years, was supplied by our home produce, without any assistance from importation, that deserves to be noticed, affords the most conclusive proof of a very greatly increased production of wheat; this increased production sufficiently accounts for the depression of prices during the period in question, and can itself only be attributed to the artificial stimulus caused by the high prices, which immediately followed the passing of the existing law, and by the hope this law encouraged, that similar prices would be maintained.

Sir—I perceive that the hon. Gentleleman (Col. Wood) admits the fact of the greatly increased production of British wheat in the period to which I refer, but implies that this increase must have been a benefit to the nation. Undoubtedly, if the increase in the growth of wheat had been a natural and healthy increase, it would have been a great national advantage, but the forced and artificial increase which took place, not of cultivation generally but of the growth of wheat, too often in place of other crops, and to the permanent injury of the land, was very far indeed from being in any respect beneficial to the country.

But this is a point upon which I do not wish now to dwell; the unnatural stimulus which had been given to the growth of wheat was certainly one powerful cause of the very low prices, which for some years prevailed, but it was not the only, nor, perhaps, the most injurious mode in which the existing law operated in this direction. It appears to me impossible to doubt that the discouragement of trade in British corn, by the varying duties upon foreign corn, must have had a very great share in producing the extreme depression of the price of wheat from 1833 to 1836. The tendency of our present scale of duties so to discourage trade in British corn is sufficiently obvious, since the very object of the progressive reduction of the duty upon foreign corn with every rise of the averages, is to check that tendency to a rise in the markets, by which alone the speculative purchaser can hope to obtain a profit. It may be contended, indeed, that at the very low prices to which British wheat fell at the close of 1835, the present scale of duties upon foreign corn could not have had any effect in discouraging speculation, since there was ample room for profit between 36*s.* or 40*s.*, at which wheat might at one time have been bought, and 66*s.* or 67*s.* to which at least the average price must have risen, before the rate of duty could possibly allow any considerable quantity of foreign wheat to be entered for home consumption. I should certainly have been inclined before hand to suppose that such would have been the case, and that the existing law would have had little effect, at very low prices, in discouraging the trade in British corn, but experience has shewn the fact to be otherwise. This may, perhaps, be accounted for, partly by supposing that the disadvantage of dealing in British corn at particular prices, from the rapid reduction of the duty on foreign corn as the averages rise, produces a general dislike to the trade, which does not cease to operate even when this reason for it no longer applies; and still more effect is probably produced by the large amount of capital locked up in foreign corn to which it is attracted, by the much higher profits resulting from a successful speculation in this than in British corn. A rise in the markets, it is obvious, only adds to the value of British corn to the extent of that rise, but it adds to the value of foreign corn in bond, not only to this extent, but to the much greater extent of the reduction of duty it occasions. It is true that these high profits are only to be obtained by incurring a proportionate hazard of loss, but I fear that a trade is not rendered less attractive to the generality of men by holding out the prospect of great but uncertain gains, rather than of moderate advantages and diminished risk. Be the explanation of the fact, however, what it may, there is no doubt that during the time the existing Corn Law has been in force, the trade in British corn has languished, and that the want of speculative purchasers has greatly contributed to depress its price. We have the concurrent testimony to this effect of very numerous witnesses, of the most opposite pursuits and opinions, some of them farmers, others corn dealers, some opponents, and others advocates, of the existing law. I will only refer to the names of Mr. Hodgson, Mr. Sturge, Mr. Scott, Mr. Calthorpe (a great advocate of the existing Corn-law), Mr. Evans David, and of Mr. Blamire, whose practical acquaintance with all that relates to agriculture, and whose sound judgment upon questions of this kind cannot fail to be appreciated by this House, of which he was so lately a Member. These witnesses, and many more whom I might mention, all concur in stating that there has been a marked absence of speculation in British corn under the existing law. I will not, however, trouble the House by reading the evidence they have given, but there is a short extract from the evidence of one of the witnesses examined in 1833, which seems to me so clear upon this point, and so important, that I must venture to call your attention to it. The witness to whom I allude is Mr. Low, Professor of Agriculture at Edinburgh, and a Land Surveyor, extensively employed, as it appears, in the celebrated corn district of the Lothians. His evidence is as follows:—

"11453. What are the advantages you contemplate from a fixed duty, which a shifting scale does not afford? I think that one of the practical inconveniences of the present system, is, that the attention of the trader in corn is directed more to the foreign trade in corn than to the home trade in corn. In the case of the foreign trade, there are two contingencies to calculate on; the decrease of duty, and the increase of price. In the case of home produce, the trader only calculates upon the contingency of the increase of price. Therefore, there appears to be a greater inducement to invest capital in the foreign than in the home produce; and I think that experience has shewn it to be so, since the operation of the law. And I conceive this practical inconvenience may be the result. When a farmer is threshing out to supply a present necessity, there is no capital between him and the consumer; whereas, if the capital of the trader in corn was more directed to the home produce, the farmer, at such a period, would be relieved.

"11454. The result of your experience, leads you to think that the speculators in corn, under the present law, speculate entirely in foreign corn, and not in home-grown corn?—Not entirely, but certainly more, comparatively, in foreign than in home-grown corn.

"11455. Have you observed the effect that has been produced on stocks in hand at harvest, either in the hands of the farmer, in his granary and stack-yard, or the miller and jobber; are the stocks as large as they used heretofore to be?—I think not, on a series of years.

"11456. In average years, the farmers in Lothian have as much wheat on hand in harvest as they used to have?—No, I do not think the farmers have the same stock in general at harvest that they used to have.

"11457. Has it diminished materially?—It has diminished to a considerable extent.''

Sir, I think this evidence sufficiently proves both the discouragement of speculative trade in British corn, by the existing law, and the great injury which results to the farmer from this discouragement. But what most particularly, in my opinion, deserves the attention of the House, is the statement as to the diminution of the stocks of corn usually left in the country, when a new crop comes in. Mr. Low's evidence on this point was confirmed by that of a very great number of witnesses; and the committee were so satisfied of the fact being as it was represented, that, in their report, they adopt the conclusion, that the usual stock of British corn, left at harvest, which used formerly to be about equal to six months' supply, had not, of late years, been more than a fortnight's consumption. I am convinced, that this statement of the committee is correct; indeed, when we remember, that their report was drawn up by the right hon. Baronet, the Member for Pembroke (Sir J. Graham), one of the ablest advocates in this House of the existing law, it is very little likely that any such statement should have been adopted upon insufficient grounds, or that any conclusion, making against the present system, should have received the sanction of his authority, unless it had been most clearly and satisfactorily established. I assume, then, that under the operation of the Corn-laws, the stock of British wheat, usually in reserve at the time of harvest, has been reduced, as stated by the committee, from a supply equal to six months' consumption, to one sufficient for a fortnight only; and I would call upon hon, Members, who wish to maintain the law as it stands, seriously to consider how important are the inferences to be drawn from this fact. It affords the most conclusive proof of the degree to which our existing law has tended to discourage that natural and healthy trade in British corn, which if left to itself, would form our real security against either the extremes of high, or of low prices.

The diminution of the stock of wheat usually kept in hand, can only arise from a decrease of the speculative purchasers by which such a stock is accumulated, and by which, at the same time, a supply of more than usual abundance is prevented from causing a ruinous depression of the markets. This must be highly injurious to the farmer, in times of plenty, but it is a still more serious consideration, how greatly the effects of a deficient harvest must thus be aggravated. It is reckoned a very great and unusual deficiency, when the crop of wheat is one fourth below that of an ordinary year; the hon. and gallant Member opposite (Colonel Wood), says such a deficiency would be almost a famine. Sir, my fear is, that under the existing law, it might turn out to be, not almost, but quite a famine, and though, happily so great a deficiency as I have mentioned, is a very rare occurrence, it is one by no means unexampled; the failure of the crop in 1816, has, I believe, upon the best authority, been considered as having been not to a less extent. I ask the hon. Member, then, to consider what would be the situation of the country, under the visitation of such a crop as 1816, under a system by which the usual stock of corn at the time of harvest, has been reduced from a six months' to a fortnight's supply? With a six months' stock in hand, it would require two successive harvests, deficient to this extraordinary degree, to exhaust the resource we should thus possess against a deficiency of food, even, though we were to fail in obtaining any supply from abroad; but with only a fortnight's stock of corn before hand, a single harvest of this description, would render it necessary for us to import at least two-and-a-half millions of quarters to avert all the distress of a positive want of the first necessary of life. The habitual existence of a considerable reserve of corn in the hands of the farmer, and of the merchant, is what alone can effectually mitigate that pressure upon the population, which a defective harvest must always to a greater, or less extent occasion, and yet the existence of any such reserve, it is, upon the showing of the advocates of the Corn-law themselves, the effect of that measure to prevent. Sir, we are at this moment suffering from this operation of the law; our present high prices are owing not merely to the restrictions of the supply of foreign corn, to which I before adverted, but to a deficiency of British wheat occasioned both by the discouragement of trade, of which I have just endeavoured to show the effects, and also by the diminished cultivation of wheat, which is known to have been caused by the low prices, from 1833 to 1836; for the hon. Member, who regarded as a national advantage, that increased production of wheat, to which he admitted, that I correctly attributed the very low price which prevailed four years ago, would do well to remember, that this increased produce, and the glut which it occasioned, were necessarily followed by a subsequent contraction of cultivation. Thus, in every way, the existing Corn-law acts and reacts in aggravating the inconvenience which results, either from a dearth, or from a glut.

Sir, this is a result at which we have in my opinion, no right to be surprised, when we reflect that the natural course of trade, with which I have shewn, that the cumbrous and complicated regulations of our law, so greatly interfere, is the instrument obviously designed by Providence, for regulating the supply of food to society, and for moderating, as far as they can be moderated, those inequalities in the prices of the produce of the soil, which the varieties of the season are calculated to occasion. To judge of the full importance of this effect of trade, we should look to what occurs in those states of society, where it is able to exercise but little of its salutary influence. In rude and barbarous countries, where the want of capital and security cripple the energies of commerce, the fluctuations which take place in the prices of corn, are found to be very great; because on the one hand, as the producers must sell to meet the charges to which they are liable; while the consumption of food can never undergo a very sudden and considerable extension, where there is little demand, except that for immediate consumption, a comparatively small excess of supply, must produce a more than corresponding depression of price, from the competition of sellers; and on the other hand, as the consumption cannot without extreme inconvenience be much restricted, when there is no reserve in the hands of capitalists to meet a deficiency, even a small deficiency may occasion a great rise of prices, from the general struggle of all to obtain their usual amount of subsistence.

Accordingly, where, by any circumstance, the operations of trade are subjected to great difficulties and discouragement, it has often been observed, that the price of grain varies very much, not only according to the different degrees of productiveness of different seasons, but with the different periods of the year.—Very low prices immediately after harvest, and very high prices before a new crop comes in are, in such a state of society, almost habitual, while the extreme cheapness of productive seasons is most fatally compensated by the corresponding intensity of dearth which a single season of scarcity is sufficient to produce.

In those parts of the world in which civilization has made but little progress, examples of this are to the present day to be found. My right hon. Friend (Mr. Thomson), last night, stated, that he had known wheat in some parts of the interior of Russia, to sell for only *5s.* a quarter, and it was in the very same part of that empire, that two or three years ago, there prevailed a dearth so severe, that it might almost deserve the name of a famine.

In the earlier periods of our own history, instances of the same kind are not wanting; the prices borne by wheat in this country, in many years of the 13th and 14th centuries, have been recorded, and I will take the liberty of reading to the House, some instances which I have selected of the very violent alterations from high to low prices, which in those days took place.

In the year 1244, the price of wheat, in money of the present day, according to Adam Smith, was 6*s.* a quarter; two years afterwards, in 1246, it was 48*s.* a quarter; in 1270, it is said to have reached sixteen guineas. I need not observe, that at this period, it did not constitute the food of more than a very small part of the population.

In one part of 1288, the price was as low as 3*s.*, and in another it rose to 28*s.* It was in 1289, 36*s.*; it fell in the same year to 6*s.*, and rose again to 60*s.* In 1317, the price was 72*s.*, fell to 42*s.*, rose to twelve pounds, and fell again to 20*s.*

Sir, I might quote many other years in which similar alterations of price took place, but it is needless to do so, those I have given sufficiently exemplify their violence at this period. I need not say that these are extremes of prices, to which in these days, and even under our existing law we have seen no approach; they go far beyond what occurred even in the calamitous period at the commencement of the present century, when we had an alternation of productive seasons, with others of almost unexampled severity, of which the effect was aggravated by the desolation of so large a part of the civilized world, by war and commotions. Nor need I observe, how grievous to all classes of the community must have been the distress to which such irregularities as these in the supply of food, must necessarily have given rise. And to what is it that we owe our exemption from the same evils? Simply to the dealings of the trader; it is by these, and by these only, that we have secured to us the inestimable blessing of the comparative steadiness in the price and supply of food, which in these days we enjoy. The manner in which commerce operates in producing this effect, is one of the most important discoveries of modern times. We now understand that the merchant in buying corn, when it is plentiful and cheap, though he may be looking only to his own advantage and future profit, is in fact performing the most essential service to the community? By the additional demand, he thus brings into the market, he checks that fall of prices, which to the great loss of the farmer, and therefore to the ultimate injury of the consumer, must inevitably take place, if with an extraordinary supply, the only purchasers were those for immediate consumption. And while he thus checks the ruinous fall of prices in plenty, he is at the same time making the best provision against future scarcity, and by bringing out upon such occasions, the reserve he has before accumulated, he mitigates the severity of the distress which the diminished supply of food must otherwise occasion. Nor is this all, by causing a timely rise of price as soon as a deficiency is known, he enforces a wise economy of consumption during the whole year, and thus arrests the horrors of a famine at its close.

Sir, I greatly regret that I have been compelled to trouble the House with these general remarks on the nature and effects of trade, but I have thought it necessary to advert to these, now well-known, principles, because they are of vital importance in considering the subject now before us, and my whole argument on the effect of the law in discouraging trade, entirely hinges upon them, while they seem to have been completely lost sight of by the speakers on the other side.

And, in speaking of the manner in which the supply of food to a large and civilized community is regulated by trade, I am reminded of the argument of the noble Lord, the Member for Shropshire, (Lord Darlington), that the present high price of corn caused no distress to the labourer, because his wages had risen in the same proportion. Surely the noble Lord would have perceived that this is utterly impossible, had he reflected that the rise of prices, which always takes place in consequence of a deficient supply, is nothing more than the effect of that natural mechanism of society, which seems to have been contrived by Providence for the purpose of guarding us against the evils of famine; it is by high prices that such an economy in the consumption of food is enforced, as may enable a short crop to last until another can be obtained. Now, if wages rose in proportion to the rise in the price of corn, this object would be defeated; it is, therefore, quite impossible that a rise in the price of corn should produce an equivalent rise of wages, and the very statement of the noble Lord shows that, in the case to which he refers, it had not done so. The usual wages, he tells us, of a labouring man, in that part of Lincolnshire in which he resides, were, in 1835, 12*s.* a-week, and they have now risen to 15*s.* Sir, I fear that this increase is by no means general; that the country with which the noble Lord happens to be acquainted has been, in this respect, unusually fortunate; but even in this favoured district, the increase of wages which has taken place is but twenty-five per cent., while the price of wheat has risen one hundred per cent. in the same time. An hon. Member opposite asks whether a labouring man spends all his wages in bread. Certainly not; nor did I mean to argue that, in order to enable him to have the same supply of food as before, his wages ought to have risen one hundred per cent. because the price of wheat had risen to this extent; but I do mean to say that, considering the proportion of his earnings, which an agricultural labourer is usually compelled to spend in purchasing bread for himself and his family, his wages ought to have risen, not twenty-five, but more probably seventy-five per cent., to prevent him from being exposed to privations by the present price of wheat, as compared to that of the winter of 1835.

But, Sir, this is a topic to which I did not intend to allude, and on which I will not further remark; my aim, in the observations I have addressed to the House, was, as I stated in the outset, to show that the evil of too high and of too low prices which we have experienced at different periods within the last ten years, has, in both cases, been aggravated by the operation of the existing law; and I think I have now proved this to have been the case. It appears to me clearly to follow from the facts and arguments I have stated, that this law, of which the object and avowed intention was to secure, by its complicated regulations, a forced and unnatural equality of prices, has, on the contrary, in its practical effect, tended to increase and aggravate those fluctuations in the price of the produce of the soil, which the variations of the season must always, to a greater or less extent, occasion. It has done this by impeding and interrupting the course of trade, which is the natural regulator of prices, and thus carrying us one step backwards in civilization — one degree nearer to the irregularities in the supply of food, which, in barbarous countries, where trade is not permitted to flousish, I have shown to occasion so much inconvenience.

Sir, I am persuaded that such will ever be the result of our interfering, by means of complicated and artificial regulations, with the natural order of things, and with that beautiful mechanism of society, which seems to me to bear so clearly the impress of unerring wisdom and divine benevolence. That more mischief has not ensued from our legislation may well, I think, be matter of congratulation; and it is a new proof how admirably contrived and adapted to its intended objects is the constitution of human society, that greater disturbance has not been produced, even by such ill-judged and perverse interference with its natural arrangements, as that of which we have presumed to be guilty. Yet let me not be misunderstood, as saying that much harm has not been done by our legislation upon this subject. Far from it; great evil, though less, I think, than we have well deserved, has resulted from the existing Corn-law; and the greater part of that evil, as I believe will always happen in such cases, has fallen upon the heads of those for whose special benefit the law was intended.

Sir, I say the greatest share of the evil consequences of the law has fallen upon those for whose benefit it was intended; and, in support of that assertion, allow me to read the account which was given of the manner in which the agricultural interest has suffered under its operation by one of the witnesses examined in 1833. Mr. Cooper, a land-agent, and also himself a proprietor of land, gave the following evidence:—

> "9667. Amongst the farmers that are made insolvent, are there many of industrious and prudent habits?—Yes.
>
> "9668. Men that had at the outset a capital adequate to the cultivation of their farms?—Quite equal to it.
>
> "9669. Is that class very numerous?—Yes, that class is numerous who had a property quite equal to the capital required upon their farms, but now their capital is diminished, and, in many cases, gone.
>
> "9670. Do you think those men, in taking their farms, acted with the average prudence, or were there instances of improvidence in taking farms?—The value of a farm has been very difficult to ascertain, both as regards the land and the produce; because the prices of produce have been so fluctuating, that no man could value land accurately.
>
> "9671. It is hardly possible for a man to judge at what price he would be safe at taking land?—No.
>
> "9673. Has the farming of land been a kind of lottery lately?—Yes.
>
> "9674. Was it the custom at former periods for farming to be a dangerous trade?—No.
>
> "9675. Was it considered as being a safe pursuit?—Yes.
>
> "9692. Do the farmers generally keep as great a stock of grain as they did formerly?—No.
>
> "9693. Is that visible in their yards and in their barns?—Yes.
>
> "9694. To a considerable extent?—Yes, to a very considerable extent it is visible."

Such is the description, given by a witness entitled to the highest credit, of the practical consequences of the system we have pursued; and I cannot too earnestly call upon all who are interested in the welfare of agriculture seriously to reflect upon this statement, of the issue of the fatal experiment in which we have now for four-and-twenty years persisted. For that long period we have now given the fullest trial to the principle of what is termed protection; in 1815 this principle was carried to its furthest possible point, and a Corn-law was passed in strict conformity with the wishes of the agriculturists; it turned out that in granting them what they had asked, the most fatal boon had been conferred upon them; and it was after a few years all but universally admitted by all parties that the law of 1815 had proved an utter and complete failure. Accordingly in 1828, another and the most approved method of applying the same principle of protection was adopted, a new Act was passed, and in framing it the agriculturists, the advocates of prohibition, and the friends of artificial regulations, were again the parties who were listened to, and whose views were adopted. And what has again been the result? I have shown that during the period of ten years, which has since elapsed, the time of Parliament has been occupied at least half of those years in listening to the loudest, the bitterest, and I must say the justest complaints of agricultural distress. The first years after the passing of the Act, deficient crops produced high prices, and these prices, with the false hope that they would be maintained, with which our legislation inspired the farmers, gave an unnatural stimulus to production: more wheat was sown, higher rent was offered for land, and a delusive appearance of agricultural prosperity was for a time created. But favorable harvests succeeded, and notwithstanding the complete monopoly of the home market the prices of wheat continued to fall; the farmers could no longer pay, or could pay only out of their capital the high rents which had been promised upon the expectation of those prices which it was the professed object of the Corn-law to secure; and one common and wide-sweeping distress involved both the landlord who had calculated upon receiving the rent for which he had let his land, and the farmer who struggled to the last to fulfil his engagement.

I appeal to those Gentlemen who served upon the Agricultural Committees of 1833 and 1836, whether this is not an account far from exaggerated, of the distress of the agriculturists from the great depression of the price of wheat in those years; and how, I ask, is this distress to be accounted for in a period of profound peace, of constantly diminishing taxation, and generally of great commercial prosperity, except by the operation of our ill-judged legislation. But now the landed interest is in a more prosperous situation, The hon. Member for Lincolnshire, (Mr. Heathcote), said, the other evening, that the landed interest was just beginning to revive, owing, I suppose, to the blessing of a deficient harvest. If this is so, what must be the state of things in which the landed interest can only prosper from a deficient harvest, which used justly to be reckoned one of the severest visitations with which Providence could afflict a nation?

Such has been the issue of an experiment of four-and-twenty years of the protective system; let us contrast with this result that which has followed from a different system. My right hon. Friend, the President of the Board of Trade, last night adverted to the case of the Wool trade; but that case is so strong that I must make one or two observations upon it. The House must be aware, that in 1819 a heavy duty was imposed on foreign wool; it was a fixed duty, indeed, and, therefore, unlike our mischievous and fluctuating duty on corn, it did not interfere with the trade in wool of our own growth. Still it was a heavy protecting duty. In 1825 it was repealed, and soon afterwards, from causes, as I believe, quite independent of this repeal, there occurred a very great fall in the price of wool. The utmost alarm was excited amongst the gentlemen of the landed interest. In the year 1828 innumerable petitions were presented to this House, all complaining of the competition of foreign wool. The Members for the great wool growing counties, in presenting these petitions, most earnestly supported their prayer; amongst others, I remember well, that my hon. Friend, the Member for Wiltshire, (Mr. Bennet), whom I now see listening to me, predicted the absolute ruin of the South Down farmers, unless the high protecting duty upon foreign wool were again imposed. In the other House of Parliament, a Committee was appointed to inquire into the subject, and witness after witness was brought forward, from amongst the farmers and owners of land, all declaring that the low price was entirely occasioned by the glut produced by the large importation of foreign wool, and that unless this importation were restrained, there must be an end of the growth of wool by the British farmer. It was asserted that there were large districts on the Continent in which the land would immediately be devoted to the production of wool, and one of the principal witnesses examined, Mr. Elman, declared, that no lower duty than one of 33 per cent. would be sufficient for the protection of English wool.

No less fortunately for the agriculturists than for the country at large, these gloomy predictions were not listened to, and the Legislature refused to re-impose the former heavy duty upon foreign wool. And what has been the result? Has the ruin they anticipated fallen upon the growers of wool? I hold in my hand a statement of the prices given for different descriptions of wool, in each year since the Peace, by one of the most eminent dealers in the North of England, who purchases a large proportion of the produce of wool in the county which I have the honour to represent, and in which, sheep farming, as it is well known, is carried to a very great extent.

From this statement, it appears, that the average price of Leicester wool during the six years from 1819 to 1824, when the high duty was in force, was 13*d.* to 13½*d.* per pound. At Midsummer, 1828, the price had fallen, and was from 10½*d.* to 11*d.*, while the average of the last six years is from 17½*d.* to 18*d.* This, as compared to 1828, when we were told, that without the re-imposition of the protecting duty, a further and ruinous fall must take place, shews an increase in the price of this description of wool, under the system of free competition, with foreign wool of no less than 63 per cent, and of 30 per cent, as compared to the period when the heavy duty was in force. Cheviot wool, from 1819 to 1824, was sold on an average at from 8½*d.* to 9*d.* per pound. At Midsummer, 1828, the price was from 4¼*d* to 4¾*d.*, while for the last six years the average price has been 10*d.* to 10½*d.*, being, as compared to the former period of the same number of years, an increase of 17 per cent. South Down fleeces have only for the last six years maintained the same average price as during the six years of the protecting duty; the average of both periods having been 17½*d.*; but, as compared to the year 1828, the rise of this kind of wool is also very great; the price at Midsummer in that year having been only 8½*d*; the average of the last years shewing, therefore, an increase of 106 per cent. Such, Sir, notwithstanding the free competition of foreign wool, which was so greatly dreaded by our agriculturists, has been the extraordinary improvement in the value of their own produce, and this improvement has taken place while, at the same time, the importations from which so much mischief was apprehended, have increased from thirty to sixty millions of pounds; and thus it has turned out, that Parliament, by refusing to listen to the unfounded fears and urgent demands of the landed interest with regard to wool, has both benefited that interest and preserved an important branch of our national manufactures from the ruin which must inevitably have fallen upon it, from the re-imposition of the heavy duty upon the raw material with which it is carried on. I think the case I have just stated is very strong, as proving the utter extravagance of the apprehensions which are so often expressed of the effect which foreign competition would produce upon our agricultural interest; but I have one which seems to me still stronger, to which I would call the attention of the House. In the Agricultural Committee of 1836, Mr. Fison made the following statement:—

> "12701. There is an immense quantity of land on the continent that might be appropriated to the growth of rape seed. Rape seed is now bearing a good price in England; I suppose from 60*s.* to 64*s.* a quarter; which is fully as high as the average price, when there was 20*s.* a quarter protecting duty upon it."

I see, Sir, that hon. Gentlemen opposite consider rape seed a very trifling article, but in the year 1836, when the statement I have quoted was made, we imported considerably upwards of half a million of bushels, while English rape seed, as it appears, still bore a very fair remunerating price. How, let me ask, could this have been, if, as we are told, the foreign grower can so completely undersell? Surely the same land and the same labour, which might be employed in the growth of wheat for one market, might equally be employed in the production of rape seed; and if the apprehensions of hon. Gentlemen, as to the effects of foreign competition, were well founded, it would be impossible for the English farmer to attempt the cultivation of this article, unprotected as it is.

Looking to these considerations, if the question this night before us, were, whether we would maintain the existing Corn-laws, or would consent to the total repeal of all duties on foreign corn, I should unhesitatingly say, that, even regarding this in the narrow light of merely a landowner's question, and not considering the other great national interests which it involves, I should give my vote in favour of a total repeal. But this is not the question before the House; and I will fairly tell the hon. Member who brought forward the motion, that I shall not vote for going into a committee with any view to the total repeal of these duties, falsely, in my opinion called protecting. It is true, the whole system of what is called protection, I consider to be grossly delusive, and most injurious to all classes of the community. I should much wish to see the time, when no duties whatever should be levied in this country for any purpose but that of revenue; but though this is the opinion as to what would be best for the country, which I most sincerely entertain, and which I therefore will never shrink from avowing, still, Sir, I cannot help feeling that it is necessary to consider the artificial condition to which, by our long perseverance in a bad system, this country has been brought, and, more especially, the amount of our taxation, and the necessity of raising a considerable revenue by duties upon imports. Looking to all these things, I think that the proper course for the Legislature to pursue, would be that of establishing a moderate fixed duty upon corn; and this is the object which I have in view, in supporting the present motion. The right hon. Baronet, the Member for Kent (Sir Edward Knatchbull), last night, taunted the supporters of the motion, with the absurdity of asking for a committee of the whole House instead of at once stating the measure we should propose to adopt; and, I believe, he alluded to some arguments which I ventured to address to the House, on a former evening, against a proposal for taking evidence at the Bar.

But truly the right hon. Baronet must be well aware, that what we propose, is not a mere committee of enquiry. He must know, that by the forms of our proceedings, our going into a Committee of the whole House, is a necessary preliminary to any alteration whatever, of the existing law, and the vote which we are now to give, will be, in fact, simply on this question, whether we are prepared to adhere to the Corn-law, as it now stands, without any alteration whatever; whether we are determined to maintain our present system of fluctuating duties, or whether we will endeavour to effect any kind of improvement? The hon. Member for Lincolnshire, (Mr. Christopher) fairly admitted that this was the point at issue, that it really is a question of whether or not we shall declare our unreserved and entire approbation of the existing law. This being the question, let me remind hon. Members who agree with me in wishing for a fixed duty, but who are alarmed by the manner in which the present motion has been brought forward, that if we should go into committee, there is but little danger of our being out-voted by the advocates of a total repeal of all duties upon foreign corn. Surely no one can suppose that the temper of this House is so adverse to the landed interest, that there is the slightest danger of the fair claims of that interest, not receiving, under all circumstances, the fullest, and most favourable consideration. I trust, therefore, that hon. Members connected with the landed interest, will not be deterred from supporting the present motion, by their dread of any extreme measure. I attribute the greatest importance to their votes upon this occasion, because I believe, that such votes would have a powerful effect upon those who look up to them, and are disposed to follow their opinions. By supporting this motion, they will be telling the farmers of England, that there is no ground for their extravagant apprehensions of foreign competition, which they have been taught to entertain, and that they ought not to trust for their future prosperity to a delusive system, which has produced, and can only produce disappointment, but that, on the contrary, they ought to rely upon their own industry, their own energy, intelligence, and enterprise. I am convinced, that they are not the true friends of the British farmer, however fond they may be of arrogating that exclusive title, who would inculcate upon him, a reliance upon the artificial regulations of Acts of Parliament, instead of upon his own exertions. Nor, can I help observing, that it is not a little remarkable, how much louder have been the complaints of agricultural distress, in former years, and how much greater the clamour for the maintenance of the system of protection, from those districts of the country which are most behind hand in their system of cultivation. From the agricultural counties of Scotland, from the county I have the honour to represent, and from the north generally, Parliament heard comparatively little of that cry of distress, which was raised so loudly in other parts of the country, from 1833 to 1836. Undoubtedly, the distress which then prevailed, did make itself felt, and felt, I am sorry to say, severely, even in the districts I have mentioned, but the clamour for further protection, and the expectation of obtaining relief from legislative measures, instead of from their own exertions, were chiefly confined to some of the southern and midland counties. Now, let the House for a moment compare the state of agriculture in these, and in the northern counties. Look at the inartificial system of cultivation pursued in the southern counties, their antiquated rotation of crops, their heavy and clumsy plough, hardly improved from the ancient instrument, of which, as schoolboys, we have read a description in the Georgics, and, I ask, how can those who adhere to such a system as this, who are so backward in improvement, expect to compete with the northern farmers, with their improved modes of husbandry, their amended rotation of crops, their light and well constructed plough, doing more work, in a single day, with one man and two horses, than the other can accomplish in two days, with a man and a boy, and with three or four horses following each other in a string.

It is by carrying into agriculture generally, the intelligence, and the enterprise, for which some districts are already distinguished—It is by thus increasing the productiveness of the soil, and diminishing the expenses of cultivation, and not by being bolstered up by protecting duties, that the prosperity of the landed interest must be secured.

Is this, Sir, only my opinion? No—it is one which rests upon far higher authority upon agricultural matters, than I can pretend to. I allude to Lord Tweeddale, one of the most distinguished agriculturists, as the House is aware, of the present day. Some months ago, I saw with great pleasure an account of the proceedings at an agricultural dinner, in the south of England, at which that noble Lord was present. Some of those speeches so usual with certain gentlemen, upon such occasions had been made, calling upon the farmers to defend their rights; to resist the slightest change or modification of the

Corn-laws and so maintain their claim to protection; when Lord Tweeddale administered a reproof to those who held this language, of which the satire was not the less from its having been, I believe, too fine to be perceived by those against whom it was directed. He told his audience, that what really deserved their attention, was the improvement of their system of agriculture; that in many important points, they were greatly behind hand, and that, if the farmers of England exerted themselves, they would soon make two ears of corn grow, where one grew now, and that by doing so, they would practically repeal the Corn-laws. Lord Tweeddale's advice was right, and it is remarkable that in the committees of 1833 and 1836, of which I was a member, I observed almost universally, that those witnesses who seemed to have carried on their farming operations with most spirit, and most success, were those who the least relied upon the artificial protection of the law. Three gentlemen, Mr. Bell, Mr. Hope, and Mr. Howton, who gave a most interesting account of the highly improved system of cultivation, which they had carried on in the Lothians, concurred in objecting to the present Corn-law. Some of the English farmers who have entered upon the same career of improvement, expressed a similar opinion; I will mention only Mr. Crowther, who farmed, if I am not mistaken, 2,000 acres of land in Leicestershire, and Mr. Ellis who had an extensive farm in Leicestershire. All these gentlemen, whose success in their agricultural pursuits was the best proof of their skill, expressed a most decided opinion as to the unfavourable operation of the existing Corn-law upon the interests of the farmer. I do not mean that they all agreed precisely as to the change which should be adopted; some proposed one alteration of the law, and some another, but they all were agreed as to the fact, that the present Corn-law is not really beneficial to the enterprising farmer.

In conclusion, I have only to entreat hon. Gentlemen to consider how deeply important is the question they are about to decide. It is now in our power, in altering the Corn-law to substitute one resting upon a sounder principle, and, at the same time, to avert any sudden or violent change. But, if we neglect this opportunity, who can tell what may be the result?

If, after the high prices of the present year, and the stimulus which I am informed this price has already given to the increased growth of wheat, we should have two favourable harvests in succession, the table of this House will again groan beneath the burthen of petitions complaining of agricultural distress. But if, on the contrary, we should be visited with the misfortune of another bad crop, the consequences will be far more serious. We have been more fortunate than we deserved in this year, obtaining, even at the high price we have been compelled to pay for it, the supply we so greatly needed. But we may rest assured, that while we maintain our fluctuating duty, the foreign grower, after the losses already sustained, will not venture to make any preparation to meet a demand for our market. If, therefore, now that the stocks of foreign corn before accumulated are exhausted, another deficient harvest should compel us again to seek for a supply from abroad, is it improbable that this demand may cause so much difficulty in the chief grain-growing countries, that they may all follow the course which has this year been adopted by France? In such an event, we might be exposed to an absolute deficiency of food, and can any man contemplate, without the most serious apprehension, the possible effect of such a state of things in our densely-peopled manufacturing districts? Even that degree of scarcity under which we are now suffering, with the high prices it occasions, if it had fallen upon us only a year ago, when we should have had, at the same time, to struggle with the difficulties arising from the stagnation of trade, would have produced an extent of distress in those districts which would have been a source of the utmost danger.

The question then is, whether we are needlessly to incur so great a hazard; whether we are to leave such interests as these to the chances of the seasons, or whether we are to avail ourselves of the opportunity we now have of securing ourselves, as far as it is possible to do so, against the ruinous fluctuation in the price of corn to which we have been exposed, and against the alternate distress thus occasioned to the commercial and agricultural classes of the community, by once more putting the trade in corn upon a sound and natural footing, free from all the risk and uncertainty to which it is subjected by our scale of variable duties?

Debate again adjourned.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Thursday, March 14, 1839.

MINUTES.] Bill. Read a third time:—Transfer of Aids.

Petitions presented. By Earls Stanhope, Hardwicke, Stradbroke, Abingdon, Tankerville, Ripon, Clare, Bradford, Yarborough, Aberdeen, and Warwick, Marquesses of Salisbury, Thomond, and Westmeath, Dukes of Buckingham, Richmond, and Rutland, Lords Kenyon, Foley, Willoughby d'Eresby, Rayleigh, Wharncliffe, Redesdale, and Sondes, from an immense number of places, against the Repeal of the Corn-laws.—By the Earl of Durham, Earl Fitzwilliam, and the Earl of Rosebery, from a number of places, for the Repeal of the Corn-laws.

CORN-LAWS — LABOURERS' PETITIONS.] The Duke of *Rutland*, on presenting a great number of petitions against the repeal, said, that some of them were signed by several agricultural labourers. He asked one of them whether he knew what was the object of the petition, and his answer was, "Yes, it is to maintain the present law." The noble Duke then asked him why he had signed a petition, belonging, as he did, to a class of persons for whose benefit, it was said, the repeal was called for? His answer was, "I signed the petition, because I thought it would prevent a revolution." Now, how could he use any argument stronger than that which was thus used by this labourer because he was firmly convinced, that if the present Corn-laws were repealed, the aristocracy of the country would receive a severe blow, and the landowners and labourers would be plunged into an abyss of ruin altogether?

The Earl of *Radnor* wished to know from the noble Duke whether he asked this labourer, who was afraid of a revolution, how he supposed the repeal of the Corn-laws could produce a revolution?

The Duke of *Rutland* replied, that he certainly did not ask the labourer that question, but he went on to interrogate him on several other points. He asked him, whether, if the price of corn were to go down lower than 40*s* or 35*s*. a quarter, he expected his wages would remain at 12*s*. a week, and his answer was, that he did not expect they would. He also asked, not only him, but six or seven other labourers who were present, what they thought their masters could grow wheat for, and be fairly and properly remunerated. He begged them to take time to consider the point. He would not tell them what was his own opinion upon the subject, but said, that he wished to learn what was theirs, telling them that they had as much right to have an opinion upon it as any one of their Lordships had. After a little while they replied, that they thought their masters should have 3*l*. a quarter.

The Earl of *Radnor* asked whether those labourers knew the fact, that the Corn-laws had never kept the price of wheat up to 3*l*. a quarter?

Lord *Brougham* was quite ready to pay every attention to the opinions of day labourers on this subject, for no people had a greater stake in the question than they had. It was his opinion, that if they were better instructed than they were, as to what concerned their own interests, they would be more likely to agree with his noble Friend (the Earl of Radnor) and himself on this subject. He hoped, however, that it was not the agricultural interests whose opinions were alone to be cited as of high authority, and great weight in matters of legislation. The noble Duke had cited the opinion of six or seven day labourers, most respectable individuals, no doubt, in favour of 3*l*. a quarter. That was their opinion; and they were unquestionably most important members of the community. But, then, he would go one step further, and say, that the manufacturing labourers ought to be consulted as well as the agricultural labourers, and not merely upon the Corn-laws, but upon other subjects. He could cite to the noble Duke certain other important questions upon which day labourers had a very strong, clear, and unhesitating opinion, such as reform, for instance; a much easier question than that of the Corn-laws. There were not only six or seven of them, but six or seven millions who were agreed in opinion, that they were not fairly represented; and when he should bring that subject before their Lordships—[The Earl of *Stanhope:* What subject?] Why, the extension of the Reform Bill. When he should bring that subject forward, he intended to consult the labourers as well as the noble Duke. What was fit for one was fit for the other. It was with the greatest satisfaction, therefore, that he had the noble Duke's concurrence in the propriety of consulting the opinions, not only of six or seven day labourers, but of six or seven millions. He should very soon present a petitition from these day labourers, all claiming to be represented in the Legislature, not only upon the subject of the Corn-laws, but upon all other subjects.

The Duke of *Rutland* entirely concurred with the noble and learned Lord, that the opinions of the manufacturing labourers should be consulted as well as of the agricultural labourers; and he was, therefore, happy to have the opportunity of laying before their Lordships a petition against any alteration in the present Corn-law from the very important manufacturing borough of Leicester, bearing the signatures of no less than 1,175 manufacturing labourers, 1,600 and odd shopkeepers, 71 master manufacturers and bankers, 118 gentry and clergy, and 307 other residents—the whole number of signatures being 3,285; and if the noble and learned Lord would go with him to Leicester, he would engage to take him to the residence of every man who had signed the petition.

Petition laid on the Table.

IMPORTATION OF FOREIGN FRUIT.] The Duke of *Richmond* would take this opportunity of presenting a petition from the inhabitants of Sompting and Lanceing in the western division of the county of Sussex, for protection against Foreign Fruit admitted into this country on the payment of an *ad valorem* duty, by an act passed last year. He would not enter into the subject, but content himself with reading the pledge given by the noble Viscount at the head of her Majesty's Government at the close of last session, which he would no doubt feel it his duty immediately to carry into execution. On the 9th of August the noble Duke (the Duke of Wellington) opposed the Customs Bill, as he (the Duke of Richmond) did also. On the 10th of August he asked his noble Friend (Viscount Melbourne) whether, if the bill were then permitted to pass without opposition, he would reconsider the objectionable clauses next Session. In the *Mirror of Parliament* these words were ascribed to his noble Friend: "I should be extremely sorry to lose or abandon this measure, which, if passed, a bill shall be introduced next Session to meet the points objected to." Upon that the noble Duke opposite wished to know when the bill would be introduced. His noble Friend replied, "as early as possible." Plenty of time had certainly been given to his noble Friend to carry that pledge into effect, and he now wished to ask him on what day his colleagues would bring in a bill in the House of Commons for that purpose.

Viscount *Melbourne* said it was a very inopportune night for the question which the noble Duke had stirred to be introduced; but first he begged to say, that he knew nothing of that book from which the noble Duke had been reading. He did not rely, in any respect, upon the authority of that book. He had nothing to do with the report it contained. The report had never been submitted to him: he was, therefore, not in the slightest degree responsible for it. It was quite impossible that he could have said what was there reported. What he did say was, that the question should be reconsidered in the beginning of the next Session of Parliament; and that, if the duties were found to be so ruinous in their effects to the growers of fruit as was represented, then the matter should be remedied. That was all he could possibly say. As to saying, with respect to a bill to which the House of Commons had assented, that he would bring in a bill to have a portion of it repealed, it was more than he had any right to say. He understood that his right hon. Friend, the President of the Board of Trade, had seen many deputations of fruit-growers on the subject, and that the matter was under consideration. If the circumstances were as they had been stated to be, a remedy would be applied to the evil.

The Duke of *Wellington* said that as far as he could recollect the circumstance, the bill was introduced in an irregular manner, at a late period of the Session of last year, and that the growers of fruit conceived they were injured by some of its provisions. The noble Duke (the Duke of Richmond) stated very strong reasons why a bill affecting that class of persons should not be passed without notice. At the same time he was exceedingly unwilling to stop a measure which the noble Viscount stated, on the part of the Government, it was desirable should be passed. He, therefore, consented to allow the bill to proceed, but expressed a hope that the noble Viscount would take the subject into consideration, with a view to a remedy being applied at an early period this Session to the evils complained of by the fruit-growers, because, if any delay were to take place, the parties complaining might be entirely ruined.

The Earl of *Radnor* observed, that with respect to one article of home growth—he meant apples—the fruit-growers had no reason to complain of the operation of this measure; for apples last year were 2*s*. a bushel, and the year before 2*s*. 6*d*.; whereas they were now 4*s*. a bushel.

The Duke of *Richmond* had no wish to bring on a discussion upon the subject at the present moment, but he must declare that he would never again allow himself to withhold any opposition to a measure which he thought ought not to pass. His noble Friend had said, that all he pledged himself to was that he would reconsider the question. Why he could compel him to consider it, if he chose, by presenting this petition. He had allowed the bill to pass without saying "not content," because he believed it was the intention of the Government to repeal the objectionable clauses early this Session. As to the price of fruit, to which his noble Friend (the Earl of Radnor) had referred, he would only state that whereas in 1822 apples were 10*s*. a bushel, they were now only 4*s*. The real hardship of the law was its operation upon the occupiers, who were generally labourers of small gardens and orchards. There were a great many cottages in Sussex occupied by labourers which had orchards attached to them, the produce of which afforded them very great assistance. These were the parties who suffered by the clauses, which were very improperly allowed to creep into a customs bill, which was passed without any discussion at a late period of the Session. As to the pledge given by his noble Friend, all he could say was, that he had understood it in the sense in which it was reported. His noble Friend might have expressed himself too strongly, but that was nothing to him.

The conversation ended.

CORN-LAWS.] The Marquess of *Westmeath*, in presenting a petition from the Grand Jury of Westmeath against any alteration of the Corn-laws, stated, that the greater portion of the population of Ireland, at least 5,000,000, would be thrown out of employment, and reduced to ruin if the present law were repealed. He begged to know whether the noble Earl (Earl Fitzwilliam), who had large possessions in Ireland, had duly considered what the effect of his proposition, with respect to the Corn-laws, would be upon that country.

Order of the Day read.

Earl *Fitzwilliam* said, he should be exceedingly happy to answer the question of the noble Marquess as well as he could; and, perhaps, he could not better preface what he had to say upon the subject than by expressing, very humbly indeed, his doubt whether the noble Marquess had taken a very correct view of the effect which an alteration of the Corn-laws would have upon the prosperity of Ireland. But then there was a very important preliminary consideration, namely, to define distinctly what their Lordships, and particularly the noble Marquess, meant by the term "Ireland." If the noble Marquess meant by the term "Ireland," the 6,000 or 7,000 persons who owned the soil of that country, or if he meant the somewhat larger, but still not very numerous class of persons who were the lessees of the owners in fee of the soil, then it was quite possible that the noble Marquess might take a correct view of the effect of the Corn-laws in Ireland. It was just possible, though he did not admit it to be necessary—nor did he believe that for a very long period of time it would be found to be true—it was just possible, that the effect of an alteration of the Corn-laws might be to reduce the rent of the landlords in Ireland. But that it would have any bad effect upon the condition of the people of Ireland, he entertained an opinion diametrically opposed to that of the noble Marquess—diametrically opposed to the opinions of those who said, that the interests of Ireland were opposed to the motion he was about to make; because if there were any part of the population of the empire—if there were any class—any section of society in the United Kingdom who were interested in having the means—the good, and wholesome, and useful means of subsistence placed within their reach (which at present they had not),—it was the great mass of the population of Ireland. The noble Marquess talked of there being 5,000,000 of people engaged in agriculture in Ireland. He could only say, that he wished there were any thing like that number of persons engaged in any thing that could be called agriculture in that country. There might, indeed, be 5,000,000 of persons, and more, who lived upon the land in Ireland; and who, so living upon the land, paid all the surplus beyond the short means necessary to a wretched existence to the landlords of that country in the shape of rent. But to say, that there were 5,000,000 of persons engaged in any occupation that could be dignified by the name of agriculture, was to commit one of the grossest mistakes that mortal man could fall into; and if any of their Lordships, who were unacquainted with Ireland, should run away with that idea, and think it their duty, on that ground, to resist the motion with which he should have the honour of concluding, he could only say that they would, in his opinion, take a most erroneous view of the interests of that country. So much for a subject which certainly would not naturally have been the one with which he should have commenced his address to their Lordships upon the subject of the Corn-laws. The great variety of petitions which had been presented to their Lordships that day, as well as on the previous evening, and since the commencement of the Session, and the great contradiction of the opinions expressed in those petitions, showed, no doubt, that there was a great variety of opinions entertained in the country upon this great and important subject. It was only natural that such a variety of opinions should exist. Their Lordships, he was assured, in common with all other men, were too apt to form their opinions according to their wishes, and to form those wishes according to their interests. The interests of various classes of men were various, and thence it was, that upon this question there was so great a variety of fancied and supposed interests, although he firmly and sincerely believed, that there was only one real and solid interest. The duty, then, which it appeared to him their Lordships had to perform upon this occasion was to discuss and consider the various opinions which had been expressed upon the subject—to endeavour to separate (if he might so express himself) the wheat from the chaff—to ascertain the opinions which were based upon a solid foundation—to adopt those opinions as the ground of their own proceedings, and to discard those opinions which should appear to be founded upon erroneous views. With respect to the different classes of the community, as divided by rank and station, he certainly was not one of those—on the contrary, upon that point he entirely concurred with the noble Duke (Rutland)—he was not one of those who were at all disposed to disregard the opinions of the labouring classes. He believed, that many of them were capable of forming correct and sound opinions. At the same time, it was not to be denied, that in proportion as the education of any class of persons was more or less extended, so would be the value greater or less of their opinions; and if, as he was afraid was the case, the agricultural labouring population in this country was the class which, in education, perhaps, was the least advanced—which had the fewest opportunities of arriving at sound opinions, which men could not arrive at unless they had the opportunity of comparing their own pre-conceived opinions with the opinions of others—if again that portion of the labouring class which were engaged in agriculture, were, perhaps, more likely to act according to the suggestion of their employers than any other class of operatives—then, undoubtedly, the opinions of that class were not those most entitled to their Lordships' attention and respect. This attention, within no very long period, had been a good deal attracted to the condition of the islands in the South Sea. By one of those marvellous dispensations of Providence which we sometimes witnessed, Christianity seemed to have taken a great stride in those islands, and to have based itself upon a foundation which he trusted would never be thrown down. In the footsteps of Christianity, civilization would follow. Now, if when generations had passed by, any of the inhabitants of this country were to read in the history of one of those islands, that the importation of yams, plantains, and bread fruit, from any of the other islands had been prohibited, and under no circumstances was the import of those yams, plantains, and bread-fruit to be admitted, unless the price of these articles of food had previously risen to a very high rate—undoubtedly the reader would say, that those islanders had acted upon a very false principle; nay, would he not conclude, if that island should be visited with the evils and horrors of famine, that it was owing to the false legislation which had excluded from its shores the abundance of the neighbouring islets. Now, he was afraid, that in dealing with the Corn-laws, that England did in the year 1815 act pretty much in the same manner. By the law passed in that year the importation of foreign corn was positively prohibited unless the average price of wheat in this country had previously attained to 80*s*. a quarter. But the extraordinary part of the story was, that the persons in whose favour it was over and over again stated the law was passed were by no means contented with it. From 1815 down to 1828, during which that law was practically in operation (for the change in 1823 was a change only under contingent circumstances which never came into operation); from 1815 down to 1828, we were actually living under a law which positively prohibited the importation of foreign grain, unless British wheat had previously arrived at 80*s*. a quarter. What was the effect of that law upon the agricultural interest? Was there to be found in the history of that interest a period during which louder, and, he believed, better-founded, complaints of its distress were repeatedly, almost continually, poured forth? It became obvious, that that law could not stand. It was accordingly abrogated; and instead of that law the wisdom of 1828 devised the system under which we were now living. He admitted, that the law of 1828 was a great improvement upon the law of 1815. He thought, that the modified system adopted in the former was a great improvement upon the absolute prohibition of the latter; but, nevertheless, the new law appeared to him to possess a great deal too much of the prohibitory character. Had agriculture uniformly flourished under that new law? had there been no agricultural petitions presented to Parliament? — had there been no complaints of distress? was there no agricultural committee in 1833, and again in 1836, appointed to investigate the evils of which the agriculturists complained? There was no man who would not be compelled to answer those questions in the affirmative. Then it appeared, that neither the prohibitory law of 1815, nor the regulatory law of 1828 (for he knew his noble Friend opposite would not allow him to call the present a prohibitory law—he knew his noble Friend would tell him that it was a law not to prohibit—not to raise prices; but simply to regulate them—he should be glad if it had had that effect)—it appeared, that neither of these laws had procured prosperity for the agricultural interest. If any of their Lordships had a watch which went too fast or too slow, he apprehended he would take it to a watchmaker to make it go faster or slower, according to the fault of which it was guilty. The watchmaker would regulate it and correct its vice. Was that the effect of the Act of 1828? A regulatory act ought to have the effect of lowering the prices when they had a tendency to rise, and of raising them when they had a tendency to fall. The act of 1828 had had no such effect. If it had had any such effect he should be exceedingly glad—nay, he should be most grateful to any of their Lordships to point out to him the time, the period, and the circumstances under which it had had either of those effects. He confessed it always appeared to him, that there were some elements in the law itself which had a direct contrary tendency, and particularly with regard to the ascending scale. Their Lordships would recollect—taking 63*s*. or 64*s*., it did not matter which, as the standard price—that in the descending scale the duty increased one shilling for every shilling that the average price diminished. Not so with the ascending scale. There, indeed, the duty did diminish one shilling for every shilling in the increase of the average price for two or three stages; but in a short time the duty diminished two shillings for every shilling in the increase of the average price; a little way further it diminished three shillings for every shilling of increase in the average price; and, finally, it diminished four shillings for every increased shilling in the average price. Now, if each of their Lordships would just for one moment consider himself a corn-factor — a person holding a considerable quantity of corn in bond, he would see how this kind of scale operated. It operated in this way:— When the price of corn was 68*s*., if the factor could get it up to 69*s*., an increase in price of one shilling only, there would be a diminution of two shillings of duty; if he could get it up from 69*s*. to 70*s*., an advance of only one more shilling, he would have the advantage of a reduction of three shillings in the duty; and last of all, the last stage of the ascending scale, if he could by some contrivance raise the price only one shilling more, namely, to 71*s*., he would be benefitted by getting rid of 4*s.* of duty. He thought, that each and all of their Lordships, being corn-factors —having a large quantity of corn under the Queen's lock in London or Liverpool—would be very apt to look closely to their own interests. What would their Lordships do under such circumstances? Was there any doubt that any one of their Lordships who was a large holder of bonded corn would conspire to raise the price with the view of diminishing the duty. This was an inevitable consequence of the existing Corn-laws, a consequence of which they could not be divested. Their Lordships must see, from what he had just stated, that the effect of the Corn-laws was not to regulate prices by lowering them, but actually to give a temptation to a considerable body of persons to do everything in their power to raise them. Than this he could conceive nothing more vicious in the operation of any law that human ingenuity could devise, unless, perhaps, the mischievousness, the criminal mischievousness of the law of 1815, which prohibited the importation of foreign corn altogether. And what was the result of all this vicious legislation? Had the agricultural class been prosperous? Had the law operated as a wholesome regulator of prices? In 1833 there was a Committee of the House of Commons upon agriculture, at the head of which was a most able and distinguished Member—a great Friend of his—not now, he was sorry to say, in the ranks of the Government, where he thought, both for himself and for his credit, he had better be. What did that Committee say? At the conclusion of their report, they lauded the act of 1828, and proclaimed to the country that under the operation of that act, the fluctuations of price had been exceedingly small. Happy and most fortunate Committee, to have sat in 1833! The Committee which sat in 1826 expressed no opinion at all; for if they had, they could not have concurred with the noble Duke (the Duke of Richmond), in his praises of the law of 1828. They could not have proclaimed that under that law the prices had been steady; still less could they have made this declaration, if instead of sitting in the year 1833, they had to make their report at the present moment. That Committee had stated, that there were no fluctuations, or no fluctuations to signify, under the operation of the act; and they assumed this fact on a calculation of the cycle of the preceding five years, showing the fluctuation to be 45 per cent. No doubt this was found exceedingly mischievous both to growers and consumers. But what had been the fluctuation since? Why, if they had to report now, instead of saying that the fluctuation was 45 per cent., they would have to announce it at 119 per cent. So that this bill had most signally failed of regulating the price of corn. But it had not failed to raise the price of corn. It had raised it, and in a most mischievous manner. Did any man alive believe, that that law had not the effect which we should have seen, if we had the good fortune to be living under the old free trade of England? [*"Oh, oh!"*] Aye, he repeated, if we were living under the old free trade of England—for the present system commenced only in the year 1815. Could the noble Earl who cheered just now, say that it commenced earlier?—[Earl *Stanhope:* In the reign of Charles the 2nd.] There were, no doubt, Corn-laws at the earlier periods of our history, but they were for the purposes of giving a bounty on the export of corn. He knew, that there were laws, too, which imposed duties on the import of corn: that there was what was called the high, moderate, and low duty. The noble Earl did not suppose that he was not acquainted with all this.—[Earl *Stanhope:* It does not appear that you are.] If, however, their Lordships took into consideration the circumstances of those times, they would find that these laws had no practical operation. The law of 1803 had no practical effect; neither had the law passed during the administration of Mr. Pitt, in 1790. The price at home during these periods was high, and the people of England were enjoying all the advantages of a free trade. It was, therefore, his perfect conviction, that in the year 1815, it entered, for the first time, into the contemplation of the Parliament of England to attempt the exclusion of foreign corn, for the benefit of the landed interest. That attempt had most signally failed. His noble Friend opposite (the Earl of Ripon) stated, that the object of these laws was not to raise but to regulate the price of corn. His noble Friend was extremely jealous on this point; but if the object of them had not been to raise the price, what was the meaning of the hundreds of petitions praying not to repeal those laws? It was quite obvious, under whatever auspices they were introduced, from all the evidence that was ever given on the subject, that the real object of these laws was to raise the price of corn. ["*No, no!*"] If it were not so, he claimed the vote of the noble Lord who cried "no"; but the noble Lord must know full well, that the object of these laws was what he had stated. He would not say, that the supporters of those laws wished to raise the price of corn beyond what it now was, for we had gone a little too far; and now felt, that the whole basis of those laws was trembling under our feet. And whatever noble Lords might say in the course of that debate, and whatever vote they might come to, he was satisfied that there was a deep-rooted feeling in the minds of many of them that this question must be reconsidered, and that there were elements at work in the political and social frame of society, which, if not attended to this Session, would force their Lordships to the consideration of this question at a time when it must be entered upon under circumstances much more difficult and trying than at present, and still more difficult than they would have been five or six years ago. He was convinced, that among all their Lordships who really reflected upon the question, there was a deep-seated opinion that it was impossible to go on with this system of prohibition under the present circumstances of the country, or under those which we had reason to anticipate. But to return to the point which he had been discussing. Though this was called a bill for regulating the price of corn, it was practically a prohibition on the import of foreign corn. Could any man believe, that when wheat was 63*s*. and the duty was 24*s*. the quarter, that any corn would be imported? Why, they knew perfectly well that no corn could be imported for home consumption at that price and a duty of 24*s*. per quarter. It was perfectly clear, that the foreign dealer could not import at that price; and he was, therefore, warranted in saying, that when wheat was at 63*s*., the duty was a prohibitory one. The price of 63*s*. was quite as serious to the consumer at the present time as 80*s*. was in the year 1815. If, therefore, when wheat reached the price of 63*s*. the duty was prohibitory, the practical effect was just the same, as if a clause had been introduced into the Act of Parliament actually prohibiting the importation of foreign corn. Now, why were they to have an Act of Parliament to raise the price of corn? What were the grounds on which it rested? He knew one which was a great favourite. It was one which almost all the advocates of the law had recourse to, which we read in the evidence of the witnesses before the different Committees that sat upon this subject, and particularly of that class to which land surveyors and all such persons belonged. All of them agreed in this, that because a great revenue was raised in this country, it was, therefore, necessary to endeavour to raise the price of corn. He confessed it appeared to him the most preposterous argument that ever entered into the mind of man to say, that because the people paid a large amount of taxation it was essential to their well-being to burthen them still more; and what was the law to raise the price of corn but an additional tax upon the people? If by the operation of an Act of Parliament they kept up the price at 64*s*., which would otherwise be but 54*s*.—or at 74*s*., what would, but for this Act, be 64*s*.—what was the extra 10*s*. which we paid on every quarter of wheat but a tax on the people to that amount? And, if the consumption of wheat in this country was ten or fourteen millions of quarters, the operation of this law was to levy a tax on the people of England of 6,000,000*l*. or 7,000,000*l*. a-year. But the argument which he had noticed proceeded upon an assumption which he felt ashamed that the landed interest of England should have recourse to. They talked as if they paid the whole taxation of the country. They argued—they voted—they legislated—as if they alone paid taxes. They made the circumstance of this country paying a great quantity of taxes on other articles the foundation for asking Parliament to raise an additional tax on corn, with a view to attain an object which was anything but creditable. But this scheme had failed of securing rent to the landlord or profit to the farmer; and it must have failed, and had failed in giving good wages to the labourer. The last was one of the strongest predictions of the supporters of the measure. He was at a public meeting the other day, at which attended various classes — merchants, bankers, country gentlemen, and what might be considered the representatives of labourers, though he did not know whether there were any of that description of persons present. He had heard it said, that a certain law, discussed at that meeting, was a law for the benefit of the labourers. It would have done their Lordships' hearts good (to use a homely phrase) to have observed how all the landed gentlemen applauded that expression. Their Lordships would have rejoiced to see what a deep interest these gentlemen took in the welfare of the working classes. He confessed, that he, as an humble auditor, was astonished at this expression, but he was still more astonished at hearing it proceed from a person of great authority, of great weight, and who was respectfully looked up to by a large part of the country. He thought their Lordships would be very much surprised when they heard that the law which was thus spoken of was a law to raise the price of corn; to raise the price of the farmer's produce and to keep up the rents of the landholder. But after his having heard all these encomiums on the law in question, it turned out that the law which this person was be-praising to the skies, and in his commendations of which he received the congratulations of all those connected with the land, was the identical Corn-law the subject of his motion. This bill, a bill for the labourers! Why, in spite of the half dozen signatures of labourers which were appended to the petition which the noble Duke (Rutland) that night presented, to tell any assembly of well-educated men that this bill was meant as a benefit to the labourers, would be to insult the understandings of every one of them. The direct effect of this bill was to raise the price of the labourer's food, and to make the difference between the price of his food and his wages the least possible. If he were to frame a bill for the benefit of the labourer, he should take care so to draw it up as that the effects of it should be, that there should be the greatest possible difference between the price of food which the labourer consumed and the amount of wages which he received. The price of corn during the last few months had risen to a height so alarming, that it was necessary to raise the wages of the labourer. But the rise in the wages of the labourer did not at all keep pace with the increased charge brought upon him by the increase in the price of corn. But then there was another object which he always understood was the professed aim of the framers of this law, and that was, to supply the people of England with a sufficient quantity of home-grown corn. Well, it had failed in that respect; for, otherwise, why was it necessary to have such large importations of foreign corn as unquestionably came into our market, though under circumstances not so beneficial as if there had been a regular and steady trade kept up with regard to that article? They had not secured to the people of England a supply of corn of the home growth, nor could they expect to secure that. Since 1765 it was manifest that the population had been outgrowing the power of production in the country, and therefore instead of being an exporting country, as we had been in the previous century, we had necessarily become an importing one. But it was said that the price of corn must be raised, to enable the farmer to bear all the charges which were imposed on him. No later than this morning he saw it stated, that for land which produced three quarters of wheat per acre, and four quarters of barley, the rent assumed to be paid was a guinea, and the tithes 10*s*. If calculations of this kind were to be those on which they were to proceed, they must not have the Corn Act of 1828 or of 1813, but they must fix a minimum price of corn, and go back to the system acted upon in the first reigns of the Tudors and the Plantagenets; for at the end of the fifteenth century a wiser plan was adopted. In the report of the committee of 1833, to which he had adverted, it was stated that in the previous five years the fluctuation had been 45 per cent. Since that period it would be recollected it was 120 per cent. In the chief port of Holland, Rotterdam, at the same time, the fluctuation under a perfectly free trade was only 40 per cent. It was impossible to conceive anything more strongly illustrative of the mischievous effects of our law. He was quite convinced that it would be impossible to conceive the existence, under a free trade, of any such fluctuations in prices as had taken place under the existing law. There was another effect of the Corn-laws which he would wish to point out. If their Lordships were to consult the evidence of farmers, agriculturists, and land agents, upon the subject—if they were to go back, for instance, to the report of the commissioners of 1821, the most able report, perhaps, that ever emanated from Parliament

—they would find, that those parties had been in the habit of valuing their lands upon a calculation of 80*s.* being the average price of corn. But 80*s.* was not the price realized; and the consequence was, the farmer could not pay his rent; and one of those struggles took place between the landlord and the tenant, which, unless the former was a very kindly-intentioned man, very desirous to promote the interests of his tenants, and with sufficient knowledge of the subject to enable him to do so, must always end to the disadvantage of the latter. The Act of 1828, however, took 64*s.* as the average price of corn; but even that was not realised—the price having fallen as low as 36*s.* He believed the highest yearly average for any complete year since that period, taking what was called the harvest year, which commences on the 1st. of October, was 67*s.*; this was in the year 1831. The average of the last broken portion of a year, namely, from the first of October last, was 70*s.* 4*d.* Now, if they then fixed rents upon a calculation of an assumed corn value of 80*s.*, whereas in 1832 it fell below 40*s.*, and now upon an assumed value of 63*s.*, whereas it had also fallen to 40*s.*, it was true the difference in the latter case was not so great as in the former, but still the result must be of a very mischievous tendency to the agricultural classes in general. He thought, therefore, by these facts alone that he was authorized in saying, that if any class of the community had suffered under the existing law, the agricultural interests had suffered most. He was in this, of course, alluding only to the immediate effect of the law upon individuals. With regard to its effect upon the commercial and manufacturing interests as bodies, it was not so much the immediate mischief which injured them, but what they had reason to apprehend as the result of the principle. The commercial and manufacturing points of view of this question he should purposely abstain from entering upon on the present occasion. His wish was, to draw their Lordships' attention to the effect of the law on the price of corn, in regard to fluctuation, because, as he apprehended that this was one of the great grounds upon which the law was framed, namely, the prevention of fluctuations, he ought to rest his attack upon it, upon the ground that under it there had been very great fluctuations. That was the point upon which the law pretended to supply a remedy, and therefore it was upon that point that the signality of its failure was the greatest. He should therefore conclude by moving a resolution, "that the Act of 9 George 4th, cap. 60, entitled, 'An Act to amend the laws relating to the importation of corn,' has failed to secure that steadiness in the price of grain which is essential to the best interests of the country."

The Duke of *Buckingham* said, that he was content to take up this question on the noble Earl's own ground, and to defend the Corn-laws as they now were. The noble Earl had stated, that the Corn-laws were a landlord's tax, imposed solely for the purpose of increasing the rental, and producing no good to the labourer. Now, though that might be the opinion of the noble Earl, he did not think it was an opinion which prevailed very much among the landed gentry, farmers, or agriculturists in general of the country. He did not know how the noble Earl would attempt to make it out, that if the landlord and farmer had no protection, the labourer could hope for a living. He, for one, had always heard and understood that the distresses of the farmer had always produced a proportionate effect upon the interests of the labourer, and that if the farmer did not obtain returns sufficient to enable him to pay his labourers' wages, it was impossible but the latter must suffer. The noble Lord said, that the present law had not succeeded in obtaining that steady, fixed, and firm price which they were devised to obtain; but he would ask the noble Earl whether any law could insure a fixed and steady price? [Earl *Fitzwilliam:* No Act of Parliament. But why not let things alone?] The noble Earl said, let things alone, whilst the noble Earl himself was one of those who would not let things alone. It was because people would not let things alone that an agitation had been got up throughout the country upon this subject, creating ill blood between the agriculturists and the rest of the people, which was greatly owing to the course taken up by Ministers on this question. The agriculturists had never interfered with the manufacturing interests; and when the former were in distress some years ago, did they call for or receive any assistance from the latter? He believed, that the only benefit conferred upon them upon that occasion was the reduction of some trifling items of taxation, and amongst the rest the never-to-be-forgotten duty on shepherds' dogs, which he thought the Chancellor of the Exchequer need not be ambitious of having appended to his history. But he was really surprised to hear the noble Earl coming forward to-night with this resolution, as in 1815 the noble Earl had then expressed, as found reported, opinions very different, in the course of a debate in the House of Commons. Though the work from which he was about to quote these observations was one which the Members of her Majesty's Government might not recognize as authority, he hoped the noble Earl would allow him, on the present occasion, to read a quotation from Hansard's Debates.

"Lord Milton said, that not having yet taken any share in the debates or votes upon this subject, in consequence of not being able in his own mind to come to any satisfactory determination, and having now arrived at something like a decision, after duly weighing both sides of the question, he wished to state it to the House. The question lay between two evils; and although in the abstract he was friendly to a free trade, yet in this case, as it would not depend upon ourselves alone, he was inclined to favour a measure, the object of which was, to render us independent of foreign assistance. He could bear witness, from his own personal experience, to the severe distresses of the labourers in husbandry, to whom the cheapness of corn (so much wished for by those who argued on the other side) was a disadvantage, because that very circumstance threw them out of work: he was informed that in the Bedford Level, half the population were receiving parochial relief. Although the adoption of this Bill might be partially disadvantageous, he was convinced it would be generally beneficial, and without it he thought that the farmer would be ruined and the labourer starved. Considering, however, how many conflicting interests were involved, he could have wished that it had been deemed expedient to resort to a temporary measure, since the establishment of a permanent system in matters on which the wisest men differed, was inexpedient. It was not without pain that he had come to the conclusion he had stated; and even now he could scarcely say, that he had absolutely decided what relief ought to be afforded, though he was convinced that some immediate assistance to the agricultural interest was required. Whether the restricting price should be 72*s*., 76*s*., or 80*s*., was a matter of less moment, although under all the circumstances he was in favour of the higher sum, as giving due encouragement to the farmer, without which he could not contend with rival and foreign markets."*

These were the opinions of the noble Earl in 1815, in which he (the Duke of Buckingham) entirely concurred, and deeply did he regret to find, that the noble Earl put forth a different opinion in 1839. It was impossible for their Lordships not to be aware of the dangerous tendency of agitation upon questions of this kind out of doors, in the hope and intention of unduly influencing their Lordships' decisions in that House, and in the present instance most deeply did he regret to find that the manufacturers had so far lost sight of the great object they should have in view, the general interests of the community. Let them rest assured that if the farmers were reduced to distress, the manufacturers would soon have to rue the day which brought it upon them. Of this point he was sure, that although the agitators of this question would be foiled of their object to alter these laws, the system of agitation which they had adopted would, if persevered in, succeed in poisoning people's minds to such an extent that it was not for him to say what events might result from it. But this he did maintain, that upon a question of so much importance as this, the Government of the country ought not to have allowed it to be an open question, but one upon which their views, as a Government, should have been well determined. Under the present law, the agriculture of the country was improving every day, and poor lands were brought into cultivation which never would otherwise have been cultivated at all. They might be told that if poor lands could not be profitably cultivated under an alteration of the Corn-laws, they should only cultivate the richer sort of land. But he could prove to their Lordships from the evidence and experience of farmers that if the poorer sorts of lands were to be thrown out of cultivation, not only would the general profits of the land be very greatly deteriorated, but a very great number of labourers would be thrown out of employment. He would take the example of 400 acres of poor land at a rental of 5*s*. an acre, and compare the profits under the two systems of pasture or corn cultivation.

400 acres, at 5*s*. per acre, as in pasture, would produce,—

400 lambs, bred on the land, at 20*s*. per head . . .	£400
400 fleeces, at 3lbs each, at 1*s*. 6*d*. per lb.	90
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* Vol. xxix., p. 1220.

Brought forward . .	£490
One man, shepherd's wife, and three children, employed in its cultivation, consume one quarter of wheat per head annually, at 54*s.* per quarter	13
	£477

The produce of the land cultivated as follows: 100 acres in turnips, 100 in barley, 100 in clover, and 100 in wheat, was £ 1,665; and the consumption of the hands employed, £.96 16*s.* Deduct from £.1,665 the £.96 16*s.* will leave £.1,566 4*s.*, the net return of cultivated land. From that deduct the £.477 produced on the sheep land, and it would leave a balance in favour of the cultivation, per annum, of £.1,089 4*s.* Now, supposing they were to throw out of cultivation all these poorer sorts of land, they would not only lose so much corn and profitable return for capital, but entirely cripple the resources of the farmer and those who were employed by him. He, for one, should never wish to see this brought about; for sure he was, that if they gave the farmer that extent of protection to which he was fairly entitled, his labours would be persevered in to the advantage of the community at large, but if they tampered with the question, and broke the confidence of the agriculturists by agitating this question from one day to another, their spirit of enterprise would be paralysed, and the most disastrous consequences be the result. When the noble Lord talked of free trade, he would ask, was the noble Lord prepared to see the principles of free trade really and fairly acted upon? Was he prepared to say that free trade should be the law of the land; and were the manufacturers of the country prepared to acquiesce in that arrangement? The Corn-laws were called a tax; but what are the protecting duties upon the manufactures of the country—were not they equally entitled to that denomination? He was not one of those, however, who would deny the rights of the manufacturers to this protection any more than he was prepared to give up that which the agricultural interests now enjoyed. He hoped that their Lordships' decision this evening would be such as to show that the Corn-laws were not to be done away with. He believed that the agricultural labourer was as much concerned in this question, and as anxious for protection as the landowner, convinced that without it, not only would the farmer be driven close to ruin, but the agricultural labourers reduced to a state of degradation to which he (the Duke of Buckingham) thought they ought never to be reduced. With these views he was determined to give the noble Earl's resolution his most uncompromising opposition, and should conclude by moving the direct negative.

The Earl of *Ripon* said, that though there were some circumstances which would induce him not to go into this question at any length, yet he could not refrain from occupying some small portion of their Lordships' time on the subject, after the manner in which he had been referred to by his noble Friend who had brought forward the motion, and after the controversy on the subject, in which he had taken a part, in 1833 and 1815. He had no desire to go into the various corn-laws which had been passed, and by which the importation of corn had been more or less restricted. He would, however, say one word of the Corn-law of 1815—that, whatever might be said of it, it was not intended to raise, and had not the effect of raising, the price of corn to 80*s.* the quarter, nor did he believe that a prospect of realising that price had been held out to the farmers upon that occasion. Indeed, so little did he believe that it would have any such effect, that he had reduced his rents to his tenants, who had been quite satisfied, and had paid their rents regularly ever since. One thing had surprised him in the argument of his noble Friend: it was, that it had no conclusion. He had asked of their Lordships to get rid of the present law, but he did not say what he would apply as a remedy. He would admit, that as an individual, his noble Friend was not bound to point out a remedy, that was the duty of a wise and prudent Government; and it was the more the duty of the Government to do so, when great agitation and excitement existed in the country on the subject. They ought not to have allowed a proposition of the kind then before the House to come under discussion, without having made up their minds upon it one way or the other; but if they did not take such a course, it was the duty of the Legislature to take it. What, then, was the alternative before them? If they repealed the present law, they must act on the principle of no protection of any kind to the farmer or the manufacturer; and, indeed, that was the course pointed out by his noble and learned Friend (Lord Brougham) on a former evening. His noble and learned Friend had said, that he spoke the sentiments of manufacturers, petitioners at their bar, who were willing to give up all protection. But he (Lord Ripon) would contend, that the thing was not practicable. Did his noble and learned Friend on that occasion speak the sentiments of the woollen manufacturers of Yorkshire—of the cotton manufacturers of Manchester and Glasgow—of the linen manufacturers of Ireland—of the iron manufacturers of Birmingham? He apprehended not. If such a proposition were seriously entertained for a moment by the Government, he should not like to be the President of the Board of Trade, and to stand the badgering which he would have to undergo from deputations from those several bodies deprecating the adoption of this "no protection on principle." If they adopted that, what right had the sugar-grower in the West Indies to complain against sugar being admitted from other parts of the world duty free, or the manufacturer of rum to complain of being put on a level in point of duty with the manufacturer of British spirits; or what right would the latter have to complain of the reduction of the duty on all foreign spirits? Would the West-India planter be satisfied to have his produce put on the same level as to duty with that of slave labour? Yet, to that extent must the Government go, if they once adopted the rule of "No protection on principle." There must be no exception. What would the right hon. Gentleman, the President of the Board of Trade, who seemed to rejoice in the agitation produced by this question—what would he say to the complaints of these several parties against the application of this principle to their cases? Would he tell them, that, on principle, he must reduce all those duties? And if he did, what would become of the revenue now derived from all these duties? Why, this would produce a complete revulsion in the collection of the revenue, or rather in what little of revenue would be then left. Why the tax on two items, constituted above a third of our whole Customs' revenue; those two items were tobacco and sugar. In order to enable the Government to raise about 6,000,000*l.* on sugar, they were obliged to tax the cultivation of the soil. He did not mean to say to what extent it might be possible to carry the cultivation of beet-root sugar, but this he knew, that it was prohibited, and for no reason upon earth but to prevent the revenue being injured. And, by the way, the taxing of sugar from beet-root was an Act of three years' standing; and the President of the Board of Trade, he had not the least doubt, brought that Act in on that account, because principles were nothing in those days. He had taken the liberty of objecting to it; and what had his noble Friend said to that? Why, "If my noble Friend will give me 4,000,000*l.* from any thing else, I should not be opposed to the making of beet-root sugar." That was a very good reason, but it destroyed the idea of this Act being founded on an abstract principle. Having been driven away from the general subject, he would endeavour in what remained for him to say, to advert a little more particularly to the arguments of his noble Friend. The great principle which his noble Friend seemed to have calculated upon, and upon which he relied, and upon which he thought that his argument was made out — namely, a reference to facts, would be found to make out the opposite case. His noble Friend's statement was, that this law had not produced steadiness of price. In the first place, before that question was settled, they ought to understand what was meant by steadiness of price. He did not suppose that his noble Friend was so absurd as to mean uniformity of price. With such a multitude of accidents and injuries from weather, nobody in their senses could be so preposterous as to think they could by any law obtain uniformity of price. The very utmost they could look for (and he contended they had got it), was as much steadiness of price as in the nature of things it was possible to expect. He would show their Lordships what the fluctuations had been, and then he would show them what had been the fluctuations in price in other articles of universal consumption, the importation of which into this country was unfettered by law, and which came in in immense quantities from every part of the world; and if he could show them, that in those articles there was more fluctuation than in corn, it was preposterous and absurd to attribute the fluctuations in the price of corn to the

Corn-laws, which were the fluctuations of nature. Now, let them look at some of those facts. His noble Friend had referred to a paper on the Table, which he (Lord Ripon) had taken the liberty of moving for, but not to all the facts contained in it, and from which his noble Friend would make it appear, that this law produced great evil by variation. Now, during the first year after the bill was passed, in 1829, the highest price of corn in that year was 75*s.* 3*d.*, and the lowest price was 56*s.* 3*d.* The return from which he quoted this, was called, "An account of the average prices of wheat, by which the duty on foreign wheat was regulated." He admitted, that there was great difference between 75*s.* 3*d.* and 56*s.* 3*d.*, but in order to estimate the full extent of the fluctuation of that year, it would not do to take two single weeks; they must take the general rate, and adopt the intermediate rate. It had so happened, that there was but one week in which the larger average had amounted to 74*s.* 3*d.* on the 6th of February, and the week in which it was the lowest was as distant from that as the 27th of November. The real average between all the intermediate weeks was the fair medium between those extremes. So they found, that in 1830 the price fluctuated between 72*s.* 11*d.* and 56*s.* 1*d.* But there again the low price was the high price of two weeks, the 29th of February and the 6th of February, and the higher price existed on the 27th of August, which was no doubt attributable to considerable apprehension on account of the harvest. In the following year the fluctuation was from 73*s.* 5*d.* to 63*s.* 5*d.*, less than the former year. In the year 1832 the fluctuation was reduced again. Now, here they were arriving at the time from which his noble Friend was to prove his case; but, on the contrary, it proved the case of his noble Friend's opponents; because in that year, the fluctuation was only a fluctuation between 55*s.* 5*d.* and 49*s.* 10*d.* In 1834, the fluctuation was between 49*s.* 6*d.* and 41*s.* 5*d.* In 1835 the fluctuation was between 42*s.* 10*d.* and 36*s.* 8*d.*; and his noble Friend relied more upon the year 1836, when the fluctuation was more considerable, being altogether from 60*s.* 3*d.* the highest price, down to 36*s.* 3*d.* the lowest price. In 1837, the fluctuation was between 59*s.* 7*d.* and 52*s.* 6*d.* In 1838, there was still a greater fluctuation certainly, but to draw an argument from that which was an unusual circumstance, would be absurdity; for not only was there a deficiency in the harvest here but all over Europe, and in the United States of America. But what he had stated was sufficient to show to their Lordships that during six out of ten years, the fluctuation had been only a few shillings, between 50*s.* and something, and 40*s.* and something. That was quite enough to show the reverse of all his noble Friend (Lord Fitzwilliam) thought he had proved. But if they took the fluctuations as operating over a more extensive period, which was, perhaps, the most fair way, from the 1st of January, 1832, to the 1st of January, 1834, two entire years, the price of corn fluctuated between 63*s.* 5*d.* and 49*s.* 10*d.* There was undoubtedly a considerable difference—rather more than 20 per cent. Then in the two years and a half which followed, from the 1st of January, 1834, to the 17th of June 1836, the fluctuation was from 62*s.* 11*d.* to 47*s.* 8*d.*, being certainly rather more than 25 per cent. But then came this question—how much of that fluctuation could they in reason ascribe to the Corn-laws? He did not say, that the prices would have been exactly the same; he did not say the variations would have been exactly the same if there had been no such law; but they must prove, that those fluctuations were the consequence of this law. Then he came to another part of the argument; and was prepared to show, whatever fluctuations there had been in the price of corn, there had been equal fluctuations, if not much greater, in other articles, in respect to which there was no restriction. He had documents with him, which were not official, but which he believed to be of good authority, and he would undertake to prove what he had said, though he would not trouble their Lordships with a mass of figures. In the articles of hemp and flax, on which there were no restrictions, and which came here from every part of the world where they were produced, and which, he believed, were at one time protected—in these articles they found fluctuations far exceeding the fluctuations which he had shown had existed in the price of wheat. So again, with respect to the article of China raw silk and other articles, which in the last twelve or fifteen years, used to have a very high duty upon them, which had been taken away. In these articles they found the same extraordinary fluctuations, which could not be ascribed to any similar law to the Corn-laws. but were the result of natural causes which could not be controlled. They would find, that in January, 1825, the price of one particular species of this raw Chinese silk was 25*s*. 6*d*.; the following year it had gone down to 19*s*. That was a greater fluctuation than appeared to have taken place in the price of wheat during that time to which he had referred. In 1828, they would find again, that the price was 29*s*. 9*d*.; in 1829 it was 28*s*. 2*d*.; in 1833 it was at 15*s*.; in 1834 at 21*s*; in 1836 it had got up to 24*s*.; in 1837 it was at 23*s*.; and in 1838 at 24*s*. All this variation was not attributable to any restrictive law. So again with respect to cotton, the same thing occurred. Then he came to an article which appeared to be of peculiar importance with respect to this question; it was the article of wool, because it stood in the same relation to this country as corn. It was not in the same situation as those productions of foreign countries, of which we had none ourselves; but we grew an enormous quantity of wool in this country, which had gone on increasing to an immense extent. Wool for several years had been freely imported; but what was the fluctuation in the price of British wool? They would find the fluctuations far more remarkable than the fluctuations in wheat. Between the years 1826 and 1827 there was a fall of 25 per cent.; between 1829 and 1830 there was a rise of more than 50 per cent. Between 1829 and 1833 four years (and his noble Friend had argued on that sort of average as regarded the fluctuation in the price of corn), there had been a variation in the price of British wool of no less than 150 per cent. In 1829 it was selling at 9*d*., and in 1833 at 2*s*. In the following year there was a fluctuation of 8 per cent.; then of 20 per cent.; then a rise; and in 1836 and 1837 it fell more than 33 per cent.; then from 1837 to 1838 the rise was from 1*s*. 5*d*. to 1*s*. 10*d*., exhibiting far more fluctuation than existed with respect to corn, and quite independent of the operation of any law. Now, then, before they could affirm that the Corn-law had not produced its object—its object not being to produce uniformity, but to endeavour to control as far as possible the variations of the seasons, by alternately admitting and excluding foreign corn when they found in those articles there was much greater fluctuation, they ought to shew that it had not counteracted the natural tendency to fluctuation, or produced that greater steadiness observed in the price of wheat over the price of other things. Till that was done, they could not ascribe that fluctuation which did exist in corn to the Corn-law. He was not going to enter into the question how far the Corn-law was a landlord's and tenant's question. There was a very great deal of abuse, he thought, heaped upon those whom some called—with a sort of sneer not very indicative of noble natures—the aristocracy, whom some persons had described as being a burden on the earth. These were silly phrases. He did not like the word "aristocracy," nor did he think that it was at all necessary for them as landed proprietors, to vindicate their characters and conduct from the low and vulgar abuse which had been heaped upon them with regard to this measure. There were one or two arguments insisted upon very much, to which he should allude; one was, that this law, in prohibiting foreign nations from sending their corn here, prevented them buying in return our manufactures, and the consequence had been, that the manufacturers of other countries had greatly improved their manufactures, and had attempted to drive us out of some foreign markets which we formerly supplied. He would deny, that the foreign manufacturers having improved was any proof that it was owing to any act done by us. After the derangement of every interest in society which took place during a war of twenty-five years, and the great stimulus which had afterwards been given for the employment of capital and industry, that man must have been very short sighted indeed, who did not take it for granted, that human ingenuity and industry would cause to spring up in every part of the world, as well as in our own country, manufactories of all kinds, which in time would rival us. And he did not think that an evil. Why were we to grudge the success of other nations in the production of all that was useful in life? He was convinced that in the long run and taking the whole country together, it would be highly advantageous to us that the rest of the world should run on in the same race of honest and useful industry. He believed, that we should find our account in that. They heard a great deal of the Corn-laws affecting labour in this country as compared with the manufacturers in Belgium; and they were told, that the reason why the cloth of Belgium was so much cheaper than English cloth, was the Corn-laws—it was all owing to the Corn-laws of England. But, then, those who argued in this way, forgot that there was a Corn-law in Belgium. If then the Corn-law in England had such very bad effects, why had it not the same effects in Belgium? The Corn-law in Belgium was a more complicated, bad, and ill-constructed law than it could be affirmed the Corn-law of England was. But it was absurd to say because England had Corn-laws, that Belgium surpassed it in any branch of manufactures because of these laws, when the Belgians themselves were under the operation of a Corn-law. And, then, as respected France, they heard a great deal about the progress of France. In the manufacture of cotton there could be no doubt that France had made great progress, for the French article was remarkable for the beauty of pattern, in the goodness of material and the durability of colours, and, therefore, going into a common foreign market, France was found to rival this country. But to what was that to be ascribed? The manufacture was carried on by English artisans, and almost the whole of the machinery was made in this country. It was not the Corn-laws that sent their artisans to France—it was not the Corn-laws that exported the machinery—it was not the promised blessing of cheap bread and high wages—because there was a Corn-law in France, and one, too, that was more complicated, more absurd, and more objectionable than the Corn-law of Belgium. It was not the Corn-laws of England that defeated manufactures in countries which were themselves under the operation of Corn-laws of their own. Then there were Saxony and Switzerland. They were told there was great improvement in certain branches of manufacture in Saxony, and that was ascribed to the English Corn-laws! It would not arise, whatever improvements were made—it could not come to pass from any force of circumstance—it was to be ascribed completely to the Corn-laws, because these laws excluded the corn of foreign countries. Now, he should be glad to know, what was the amount of corn which Saxony grew? They grew no corn for export in Saxony? As far then as regarded the proscription of foreign corn tending to the improvement of foreign manufactures, he asked what had corn to do with it, when they could not import it from Saxony? What corn then could they import from Switzerland? They did not grow wheat.—[Lord *Holland:* They do not eat wheat.]—If in Switzerland they did not grow wheat, they had it not to sell. It was, then, absolutely impossible that these Corn-laws could have any effect upon the manufactures of Switzerland. But, then, it might be said, that it was not so much the countries in which the improvements of manufactures took place that were affected by those laws, as that the effect of the Corn-laws had been to induce certain other countries not to take English manufactures, and, consequently, to prefer the manufactures of certain other countries, such as Saxony and Switzerland. But he did not know why the countries to which the Swiss sent their manufactures should on this account be preferred. He did not think, for instance, that the Bavarians could be more favourable to the admission of Swiss in preference to British cotton, on account of the English Corn-laws, and because the English took no corn from them. It could not arise from that circumstance, for he should be glad to know how much could be the wheat exportation from Bavaria? It was impossible that the Corn-laws could be the cause of that preference. And then as to Wirtemburg, he thought he did hear of its having been said somewhere, that some Wirtemburg minister had said, "How can you expect us to take your manufactures if you will not take our corn?" Now, the Wirtemburg minister who said that, must have been a *rusé diplomat* indeed; because there was no corn to be procured from Wirtemburg. It might also be said, that the Corn-laws excluded our manufactures from Austria. The population of Austria was between forty and fifty millions, and it certainly would be an important matter for the British manufacturer if he could find a ready access to the markets of Austria. He was not, however, sure, but that Austria had a Corn-law of its own; he was pretty sure that there was a Corn-law in Austria. But at all events, Austria gave no facility to the introduction of Saxon or Swiss manufactures as contradistinguished from English. At least they had heard a deal about a recent treaty which had been signed by Austria, which would open new facilities for our commerce and trade, and the introduction of our manufactures into Austria. If that were so, then it was plain that Austria did not consider the English Corn-laws an objection to her entering into a treaty which was to be so advantageous to England. Then they came, after all, to the consumption of their manufactures by Prussia; and the argument was, that as they did not take the corn of Prussia at all times, and at all prices, that Prussia would not take an unheard of, and incalculable amount of English manufactures, and the ready mode of accounting for this was, the existence of the Corn-laws. It appeared to him that it was a most extravagant proposition. [The Duke of *Cambridge*—She does.] It appeared then agreeably to what was his own impression of the practice of Prussia, from the confirmation of that impression which his Royal Highness had the goodness to supply, that Prussia did actually impose heavy duties on our manufactures. But the existence of the Corn-laws was not the motive for the imposition of those duties, nor of the imposition of any other duties which might be levied by any other of the Powers of Europe. All those Powers were, and had been for many years, using every artificial means to encourage the manufactures of their own subjects, and this they did by imposing high duties on the importation of the corresponding manufactures of other countries. He thought, then, that his noble Friend opposite not having succeeded in showing, that the Corn-laws caused those fluctuations of price which he believed were in truth inevitable on such an article, and to be attributed to the dispensations of Providence, had entirely failed to make out the proposition to which he asked their Lordships' assent. At the same time he begged to assure his noble Friend and all their Lordships, that there were very few persons who were less bigotted to the present system of Corn-laws than he was; he certainly thought, that the law of 1815 was a failure, and he rejoiced when it was altered; and if his noble Friend would prove to him, that these present laws had proved a failure, that they were prejudicial to the interests of the country generally—if his noble Friend would do that, in whatever degree it might affect his private interests, and he was not at that moment prepared to say how far his interests would be affected by such a change, there would be found no person more ready, and he was well aware, that their Lordships were ready, to sacrifice all considerations of a private and personal nature to the general advantage; but thinking that the course proposed by his noble Friend would do harm, and finding, too, that his noble Friend was wholly unprovided with anything in the shape of a substitute for the present system, which his noble Friend's motion was the first step to abolish, he thought their Lordships could not do better than put a stop to his noble Friend's measure at once, by giving a distinct negative to the motion.

The Duke of *Wellington* said, that after the powerful speech of his noble Friend who had just sat down, he was almost ashamed to rise for the purpose of giving their Lordships the same recommendation with which his noble Friend had concluded —viz., to reject the proposition of the noble Earl. This he recommended to their Lordships; but, above all, he most earnestly recommended them not to attend to the threats which the noble Earl had held out to their Lordships. He was sure, that their Lordships were disposed to attend with respect to everything which fell from the noble Earl with the exception of those threats, and them he earnestly recommended their Lordships to treat with anything but respect. He hoped that to those threats the House would not give any attention at all, but that they would take the proposition of the noble Earl on its own ground, and vote with his noble Friend, the noble Duke near him—that was to say, he hoped they would reject the proposition. In fact, the resolution proposed that night embraced but a very small part of this important question; but let their Lordships observe this, that if they adopted this resolution, they would be called upon to go forward still further, not perhaps by the noble Earl, perhaps by none of the noble Lords opposite, but by others who would found themselves on this resolution. After what had been so ably said by his noble Friend who had just sat down, it was scarcely necessary that he should address their Lordships at any length on the substance of this resolution. The noble Earl opposite, in stating that the prices had not remained steady under the operation of the present system, of course did not mean, he was certain the noble Earl could not mean, by the term "steady," absolute steadiness; he must mean steadiness comparatively to the prices of corn in other countries at the same time. But his noble Friend who had just sat down had made his comparisons on the supposition that the word "steady," as used by the noble Earl opposite, meant absolute steadiness, and had contrasted the fluctuations in the price of corn in this country, with the fluctuations in the prices of other articles. Now he (the Duke of Wellington) would compare the steadiness of the price of corn in this country with the degree of steadiness of price in the same article at different points of time, in different countries. He spoke from recollection, and from having lately seen papers on the subject in the hands of noble Lords, when he said, that comparing the effect of these laws with the changes resulting from the former laws in various parts of the country, it would be found, that the variations of the prices under these laws from the period of their enactment up to the present time, were greatly less than had been the fluctuations and variations of price under any other system. But he would go a little further and say, that on comparing the alterations of prices under these laws in this country, with the variations of the prices of corn in other parts of the world, in which there happened to be no Corn-laws—taking, for instance Dantzic, Hamburgh, and the United States of America, where there were no Corn-laws, it would be found that the variation of the prices of corn at Dantzic, at Hamburgh, and in the United States of America, have been frequently greater than in this country during the operation of the existing Corn-laws. The statements from which he derived these facts were available to the noble Earl, and he would refer the noble Earl to them. If the noble Earl looked at the returns, he would find, that he (the Duke of Wellington) was correct. Now, this went to destroy the noble Earl's argument of instability, and, that, it would be seen, was the only ground of the resolution. This was the only ground on which the noble Earl asked their Lordships to consent to a total alteration of the present system, and it failed him entirely; and therefore it was absolutely impossible for their Lordships to vote for the noble Earl's resolution. The system which it was the object of this law to establish, was a system of encouragement of agriculture—a system which was established at the termination of the last century, and under which he would venture to assert, without fear of contradiction from the noble Earl, or from anybody elsewhere, that the agriculture of this country had made a progress, and had risen to a degree of superiority, throughout the country, greater than existed in any other part of the world, not excepting even the Netherlands. Under this system of encouragement to agriculture, large sums of money had been laid out and invested in land and property relating to land, and great sums were at that moment in the course of investment in the same way, and he called on their Lordships not to agree to any resolution, or to any measure of the Government, if they should think proper to propose any such measure, which would have the effect of withdrawing from agriculture that protection, and thus putting a stop to those great improvements which were at present in progress, and which he said had had such an effect upon agriculture, that the amount of produce raised in this country was thereby greatly increased. He believed that the produce of the country had been immensely increased, and particularly in the valuable article of wheat, the annual produce of which was now nearly equal to its greatest annual consumption. Such was the supply of wheat, that the very lowest order of the people subsisted mostly upon it, which was not, he believed, the practice in any other country. The practice of living on wheaten bread was not known any where else; it was not known in France; it was not known in Germany; it was not known in the Netherlands, nor was it the case anywhere else. In fact, the lowest orders lived upon wheaten bread in no country of the world except England. He entreated their Lordships to bear this in mind; he entreated them not to break down a system which had carried cultivation to such a pitch, that an amount of produce was raised in England alone which was found to be nearly equal to her greatest annual consumption. He was happy to say, and he thought that before he sat down he should be able to prove to their Lordships' satisfaction, that in proportion as the agriculture of the country should improve, the annual amount of produce would increase. This was his firm belief; and he was confident that with the increase of produce there must come, and come naturally too, a corresponding decrease of price, and it was to that consequence that he looked, as being the solution of all the difficulties which at present attended this question. But, let their Lordships recollect, it was absolutely necessary to keep up this encouragement in order to arrive at the desired result of the reduction of price. Very lately, when wheat in this country was at 73*s.* a-quarter, and the duty on importation was a merely nominal one of 1*s.* a-quarter, was there any such quantity of foreign wheat introduced as was sufficient to lower the price? Not at all. The moment the ports were opened, the merchant importer stood on the same ground as the farmer; and he would not sell his corn for 1*s.* less than the price of the day. Did they ever hear of corn coming in from abroad, and being brought to market at a cheaper rate than it was selling for in this country? Never. But look to the operations of the law prevailing in the former part of the war; the prices varied from 70*s.* a-quarter to 150*s.* a-quarter. Did they ever hear of foreign corn being sold for 1*s.* less than what could be got for it in the general markets of this country? It must be sold by the merchant importer at the very same price as by the farmer. ["*Hear, hear!*"] It was all very fine to say that the price would be exceedingly low if these laws were abolished, and corn were allowed to be introduced without restriction. It certainly would be low if the price of corn raised in this country were low, for the foreigner could not get more for his corn here than the farmer; but if the price of home-grown corn was necessarily high, the introduction of foreign corn would not reduce it. It was very important to look at this question with reference to the interests of the commerce of the country, and also to consider the effect of the abolition of the Corn-laws on the price of provisions, and on the price of manufactures. Now, if they discouraged agriculture to such a degree that any large body of persons and a great amount of capital came to be withdrawn from it, the price of native produce must rise; there would be so much less produce raised than before, and its price, the price of the native produce he meant, must rise. Now, the price of the corn imported would be the price of the diminished quantity of the home-raised corn. Would the manufacturing labourer profit by that? Would the manufacturer find any advantage in it, when the diminished value of wages forced the labourers to raise the market upon him. Would the merchant exporter gain anything by the change? Would it not be found that in proportion as the manufacturer must pay a larger amount of wages, the prices of his manufactures must be augmented, and therefore the disadvantages of competition with merchants abroad augmented likewise? But there was another view of the question which he besought their Lordships to take—he meant the question of our dependence on foreign produce for a great part of our annual consumption, which would be induced by the abolition. On looking over the papers which had been produced on former discussions of this subject, he had seen proofs that in certain countries, duties were laid on the exportation of corn when it was sent from those countries hither; and that statements were made by the Sovereigns of those countries to this effect—"As the corn is wanted by Great Britain, and her subjects can afford to pay the duty, therefore they shall pay it." That duty must come out of the pockets of Her Majesty's subjects, and be taken into account in the price of the goods of the manufacturers. They had heard a great deal, both to-night and on a former evening, upon the competition of foreign manufacturers with our own in foreign markets. He certainly was one who did not despise the consideration of these subjects, which, on the contrary, he thought of very high importance; but this question was a large one, and it was necessary to judge it on rather broader grounds. This consideration might be material with respect to some countries of which we had been the creditors, but he did not see how our relations with those which were not corn countries could be affected by any change in the Corn-laws. The means of taxation, which would be thrown into the hands of foreign Powers, in the event of the repeal of the Corn-laws, constituted in his view a most important feature of the case. Suppose we were involved in an arduous competition with Prussian or Russian manufacturers for the supply of a particular article. If we should make up our minds to rely entirely on those countries for a supply of corn, as we were called upon to do by the opponents of the Corn-laws, and if the success of our manufactures depended on the abundance and cheapness of corn among our population, must we not expect, according to the usual course of mankind, that the corn exported from those countries would be taxed so as to render the food of our manufacturers as dear as it would be under any other circumstances? If that were likely to be the case, he would strongly advise them to agree to no measure which should render this country dependent upon others for its supply of bread. Let them persevere in those measures which had been successful in raising the agriculture of this country and increasing its produce; let them increase its produce to the utmost possible degree, and render all the articles of food as cheap as they could be, and then let them see what they would do with reference to commerce and its interests, but let them, he entreated, begin by securing to her Majesty's subjects a supply of the best food from the produce of her Majesty's dominions.

The Earl of *Radnor* said, that the noble Duke had referred to threats which he said were uttered by the noble Earl who had brought this question under the consideration of their Lordships. He (the Earl of Radnor) was not aware that his noble Friend had uttered any such threat; he had heard none, and he was sure that none were intended, and therefore he must conclude that the noble Duke's indignation was founded on misapprehension. The noble Duke, in the course of his speech, had referred to the price of corn in other countries for the purpose of showing that greater variations in price had taken place in those countries where there were no Corn-laws than in Great Britain. The noble Duke had specified the United States, but without any particulars as to years or sums; he believed no other country was mentioned. [Several noble Lords, "Dantsic."] The noble Duke, he believed, mentioned Dantzic, but no other. [Several Peers, "Hamburgh."] With respect to the United States, it was impossible, without some more definite information, to give such an answer or explanation as circumstances might admit of; but as to Dantzic and Hamburgh, they were only ports of transit, and the rate of prices there must depend, not only on the demand from England, but on the quantity of grain raised in the corn countries exporting through them for the supply of this country. As there were no great corn-growing countries in the vicinity of Hamburgh, no argument could be drawn from the state of matters there with respect to the variation of prices. But if the noble Duke had made inquiries relative to another country which had never been a corn-growing country, which was one of great opulence, which had engaged in extensive wars, and which depended entirely on foreign countries for its supply of corn, he would have found that at Amsterdam, up to the year 1815, when our Corn-law being passed, disordered the commercial regulations of all Europe, the prices of corn had been for 150 years as uniform as in any other part of Europe, and he believed lower than in most corn-growing countries. That fact was of itself sufficient to overturn the argument on which the noble Duke had laid so much stress at the close of his speech. As to the evil of being dependent on other countries, it was one often used by the supporters of the Corn-laws, and in their hands it assumed a very horrible shape. But could the noble Duke really entertain any fear, even if this country grew hardly any corn, and we were reduced to a state of complete dependence on other countries, that our supplies would be cut off? The argument was, that if we encouraged importation our arable land would be thrown out of cultivation, and, no corn being grown, we should be left to the tender mercies of our enemies, destitute of food. But, in the first place, if the arable land were thrown out of cultivation, it was not to be supposed that it would be left entirely waste; it would be converted into pasture, Then again, at no period when there was an importation of wheat had there been a large importation of barley; so that really the calamity would not be so very great if we were left on a short allowance of barley bread, with good butter and cheese. Those who talked of the danger of having our supply of corn cut off seemed to forget that we required for the consumption of this country 72,000,000 quarters. He would assume, for the sake of argument, giving his opponents all the advantage they could desire, that 52,000,000 quarters were supplied by foreigners at the low price of 30*s*. This would give 78,000,000*l*. sterling as the sum to be paid to foreigners for bread. He would ask those persons who were so much afraid of falling into the hands of the enemy, was it credible, that those who received so enormous a sum would consent, for the sake of inflicting an injury on us, to forego the advantages of such a traffic? Let us make it the interest of other countries to supply us, and we need have no fears that they would refuse to do so. How would the people of Manchester receive the proposal of passing an Act forbidding the exportation of foreign twist? Was it to be supposed that they would submit to it? It was just as inconceivable, that the people of corn-growing countries would comply with a law forbidding the exportation of corn. He was putting the case of the whole supply coming from abroad, though he looked on that as impossible. The noble Duke, however, had said, that the Neapolitan government had passed an edict prohibiting the exportation of corn, and that the French government had laid a heavy tax upon it. He admitted the fact, but how had it arisen? For a great number of years we had refused to take the corn of those countries, so that the lands which would otherwise be employed in raising a supply of corn for this country were thrown out of cultivation. At last came a year of distress and scarcity — he wished it might not prove one of famine—and we asked them to let us have their corn. But just at the time they had it not to spare, for their own harvest had not been very favourable, and their supply was proportioned only to their own demand. They had hardly enough for their own use, and it could not be expected, that they would willingly part with any to the English who at every other time refused to take it. If we would consent to enter into a regular intercourse with those countries, to keep up constant communications, and look to them constantly for a part of what we required, no doubt they would extend their cultivation with a view to provide for our wants, there would always be a supply equal to both their demand and our own, and no such prohibition as that enforced by the temporary edicts alluded to would ever take place. His noble Friend, in his remarks on the variation of prices, quoted from certain papers, he did not know of what kind. They were not official papers, and the noble Earl's quotations were certainly different from the statements of an official paper from the Board of Trade, which he had received that day. He could not help thinking it would have been rather more fair to take a larger compass than a year in considering the variations of prices. In 1829, according to his paper, the variation of price between different weeks of that year was 26 per cent. In the former year there was a rise of 31 per cent. in the price, and in the year following, 1829, there was a fall of 18 per cent. He thought, however, that both 1829 and 1830 should be left out of consideration, inasmuch as they were probably disturbed by the operation of the new law. In the five years following 1830 there was a remarkable variation in the price, which regularly fell; in the year 1831, wheat was 67*s.* 1*d.*; in 1832, 60*s.* 8*d.*; in 1833, 53*s.* 6*d.*; in 1834, 48*s.* 6*d.*; in 1835, 40*s.* 7*d.* In none of these years was there any very remarkable variation within the twelvemonth; but the variation between the different years of the scale was very remarkable—from 1829 it was 43 per cent. The noble Duke had talked of the protection and encouragement given by this law to the agriculturists. The noble Duke must mean the farmers; how, then, did it work for them? The farmer embarked his capital in agriculture in 1829 or 1830, in the confidence, as he was assured by the promoters of the new law, that it would maintain prices steadily, and at not less than 60*s.* So far from this, in 1835 the price had fallen from 70*s.* to 40*s.* Of course the farmer, who had calculated on prices being steady at 60*s.*, must be exposed to ruinous losses. The noble Duke who spoke early in the debate had throughout confounded protection to the landlords with protection to the farmer. The present law might protect the landlords, by keeping their rents unnaturally high; but it was mere delusion to suppose that it protected the farmer, still less the labourer. But it did not protect the landlord; for if the farmer went to ruin, as he must do, did not the landlord suffer? After the expiration of the five years there was a regular rise in the price. In 1836 it was 43*s.* 11*d.*; in 1837, 56*s.* 3*d.*; in 1838, 59*s.* 10*d.*; and last year, 74*s.* The consequence of all this fluctuation was, that the business of the farmer had become a mere gambling speculation, utterly devoid of certainty or steadiness. Monopoly always produced uncertainty and fluctuation. The hop trade was a complete monopoly, hops being grown in few parts of this country, and their importation being prohibited; and it was composed of a series of gambling transactions from the insertion of the plant in the soil to the sale of the produce in the market. He thought the apprehensions entertained as to the ability of the British agriculturists to compete with foreigners were much exaggerated. Their Lordships would recollect, that some years back a measure was introduced by a noble Lord opposite, then Chancellor of the Exchequer, for the diminution of the prohibitory duty on foreign silks. Now, what was the effect of that bill? In the five years before the reduction of the duty on foreign silk imported into this country, the quantity entered for home consumption amounted to 2,656,000 lbs., and was there any falling-off in that amount in the five years subsequent to the passing of the bill to which he had alluded? On the contrary, he found, that during the subsequent five years the quantity imported rose to 5,189,000lbs., or very nearly double what it had been before the reduction of the duty. Again, with respect to the quantity of manufactured British silk exported to other countries, he found that during the four years before the reduction of the duty the value of the silk exported was 384,389*l.*, and during the last four years it had risen to 722,102*l.*, or about double the first amount. It was clear, therefore, that the reduction of the duty on foreign silk imported into this country had not been productive of injurious consequences, but that, on the contrary, it had contributed largely to increase the trade. Therefore the argument which had been used by the noble Duke opposite, that the repeal of the duty on corn would injure the British grower, he held to be totally at variance with experience, It was the same argument which had been used by those who supported the monopoly in silk, and which had been proved fallacious by the results of the reduction of the duty on that article. Again, with respect to wool. The wool-market had also been opened to the foreign wool-grower, and with precisely the same results as in the case of silk. Up to the year 1824 there had been a protecting duty on foreign wool, and when it was proposed to reduce that duty, the wool merchants of this country raised an outcry that they should all be ruined if such a course were followed. The duty, however, had been reduced, and no ruinous result had followed that step; but, on the contrary, the quantity of wool imported into this country rapidly increased when the protecting duty on foreign wool was in a great part taken off. He found that in the five years previous to the reduction of the duty the quantity of foreign wool imported into England amounted to 17,000,000lb., and that during the five years subsequent to the reduction of the duty upwards of 50,000,000lb. were imported. Then as to the quantity exported, he found that in the five years before the reduction of the duty the value of the woollen export was 530,000*l.*, while in the five subsequent years it increased to 2,640,000*l.*, and the price, he believed, was not lowered in the least degree. He admitted there had been considerable variations in the price of wool, but looking at the price during the five years previous to the reduction of the duty, and comparing them with the prices of the five years subsequent to that reduction, they would find that the price had not been reduced. Now, if such had been the results of a reduction of the duty on silk and wool, what reason was there to suppose, that the importation of foreign corn would prove injurious to the English agriculturists? It was clear from the statement he had made that the reduction of the duty on silk and wool had not injured the English manufacturers, and that the trade in those articles had increased, and he was persuaded, that the free importation of foreign corn would be attended with similar results. Why should not the English agriculturists and landlords be able to compete with those of other countries? They had as sturdy husbandmen as other nations; they had better cattle, better implements of husbandry, better markets, and better roads, and he could see no reason why the agriculturists of England should not be able to compete with those of other nations. For himself, he was persuaded that a free trade in corn would, instead of injuring the agriculturists, be of essential advantage to them. He had no hesitation in saying, that in his opinion the existing Corn-laws ought to be altogether repealed, and that there ought to be no protecting duty on foreign corn. It was asked why they should not protect corn, when on other articles of foreign produce there was a protecting duty? They were told that the effect of the Corn-laws was to insure a better article; but for himself, he was persuaded that it would be better for the people, and that they would have better corn, were there no protecting duty at all. The natural effects of competition in every article of trade or commerce was to improve the quality, and no branch of trade went on well without competition. Competition set every thing right; and if the farmers were left without protection, and if they were placed in active competition with the corn-growers of other countries, he was of opinion, that such a state of things would be advantageous both to them and to the landlords, and that a supply of better corn would be secured to the consumers. Protection made the farmers gamblers, and he had already shown how the price of corn fluctuated under the existing system. It had been said, that a protecting duty was an advantage to the labourer; but in his opinion the contrary was the case. It was, in fact, a great grievance to the labourers to have corn dear, and it could not fail to be otherwise, for although it was contended, that when the price of corn was high wages rose in proportion, yet a rise in wages was by no means a consequence of a rise in the price of corn. Wages did not depend on the price of provisions. He admitted, that a rise or fall in the price of provisions would ultimately produce a rise or fall in the wages of labour, but not immediately. Wages would be affected by a rise or fall in the price of provisions, but that effect would follow, not immediately, but after a lapse of perhaps three or four years. The rate of wages depended not on the price of provisions, but on the demand and supply of labour, and was not affected, at least not immediately, by the price of corn. Besides, the labourer was a consumer, and therefore a protecting duty and a high price of corn could do no good to him, but must, in fact, operate injuriously, by reducing the number of comforts, which, with cheaper provisions, he would be able to command. In truth, a protecting duty and high priced corn, did no good to any one but the landlord. It was not an advantage to the farmer or to the labourer, and in his opinion the duty on corn ought entirely to be repealed. He had understood, that the noble Duke opposite intended to move the previous question, but he found that the motion of his noble Friend was now to be met with a positive negative; but how their Lordships could agree to such a resolution, he was utterly at a loss to conceive. How they could deny that the existing system had failed to secure the objects which the framers of that system contemplated, he could not comprehend. The argument of his noble Friend was, that the Corn-laws had not produced steadiness of price, and it had been shown that in the seven years following, the adoption of the present laws, there had been a fluctuation in the price of corn of upwards of 70 per cent. He therefore, trusted that their Lordships would not oppose the resolution which had been moved by his noble Friend.

The Duke of *Wellington* in explanation said—My Lords, the noble Earl opposite, has entirely mistaken the argument which I used. It is true that I called your Lordships' attention to the effects which the protection afforded to the agricultural interests of this country during the last half century had produced, and I stated at the same time, that this protection applied equally to all other interests. My Lords, I also expressed it as my opinion, an opinion founded on unquestionable evidence, that enormous sums have been laid out during the last twenty years in the improvement of land — an improvement which I said, tended to the benefit of the whole country, and which the noble Earl himself admitted in so many words to be the case —and I entreated your Lordships not to consent to a resolution which led to the first step towards the abolition of the present system. The noble Earl talked of the Corn-laws as a monopoly; and he described them as a system favourable only to the landlord, and not to the farmer or labourer. My Lords, I know nothing about either landlord, farmer, or labourer, when advocating any question in your Lordships' House — and I beg noble Lords to understand that when I come down to this House, that I come here for the public interest, and for the public interest alone. In the discharge of my duty as a Member of your Lordships' House, I have no more to say either of landlord, farmer, or labourer than the noble Earl himself; and what is more, my Lords, I am thoroughly convinced that there is not a noble Friend near me who does not look at the question wholly on public grounds, that is, with a view to the general interests of the country, and it was on that ground that I myself argued the question, throughout the whole time I addressed your Lordships. The noble

Earl (Earl Ripon), who sits near me, argued the question in this way. He said, that there had been a great variation in the price of wool, although that article was unrestricted, and he went on to show that there could be no reason why there should not be the same fluctuation with respect to corn, even if the trade in corn were thrown open. The noble Earl, therefore, mistook the argument of my noble Friend; for so far from my noble Friend contending that the Corn-laws had not produced uniformity of price, what he said was, that with respect to wool, in which the trade was free, the same thing occurred. At the period the restrictions were taken off wool, the home producers complained, whether with or without reason, I will not stop now to inquire, for that is another question, but when the exportation of wool was allowed, although the experiment succeeded entirely, uniformity of price was not obtained. My Lords, the noble Earl has misunderstood me in another point. He seems to suppose that I said it was not desirable to import corn from foreign nations; but, my Lords, I said no such thing. What I said, was, that in the time of war it was important that we should be able to supply ourselves; but I first stated, and gave proof of the fact, that the price of foreign corn had always been the same as the price of that of home growth. No difference, I said, was made by the merchants who dealt in foreign and English corn, with reference to price, and, therefore, that there was no cheapness resulting from the introduction of foreign corn. My Lords, at the same time that I made this statement I also said, that during the war, an instance had occurred in which a foreign power had laid an additional tax upon the exportation of corn to this country, on account of the high price obtained for corn here at that period; and that we had not only to pay the advanced price for what we required for our consumption, but also the additional tax imposed by the power to whom I alluded. This, my Lords, was my argument.

The Duke of *Richmond* said, the vote which he meant to give on this occasion would be against the resolution of his noble Friend, for he could not consent, like the noble Earl (the Earl of Radnor) to nibble a little in the hope of gettiing more. He was surprised at the observations of the noble Earl, and, if he objected to the Corn-laws, why did he not move for their repeal at once? His conduct was unlike that of an English Nobleman, or of the honest hardy peasantry of this country, who instead of this nibbling system, were in the habit of going boldly and directly to their purpose. If they had an object in view, they would go straight forward to attain it, and not descend to mere nibbling. He wanted to know how a free trade in corn would reduce the price of bread? He denied, that the corn tax was a landlord's tax, and when they saw what had been the result of the removal of the duty on wool, how could their Lordships' suppose, that a free trade in corn would lead to a reduction in the price? The argument, as it seemed to him, was untenable. He had heard declarations with respect to the advantages which operatives, the labouring classes of England, would derive from cheap bread, but their Lordships had not yet been told of what this cheap loaf was to be made. Was it he should like to know, to be made of barley? This was a question which the Gentlemen who went about the country getting up petitions on the subject should answer. He felt convinced, that the effect of the repeal of the Corn-laws would be to oblige the operatives and labourers of this country to return to barley bread, and there could be no doubt, that the object of the manufacturers in wishing these laws repealed was to reduce wages. When he said manufacturers, he did not mean the respectable manufacturers, because he believed they as a body were favourable to agriculture; but a number of large mill-owners, who not being satisfied with moderate profits, were anxious to lower the prices of labour, in the expectation of being better able to compete with foreign manufacturers. Nothing could be more delusive, than to suppose, that foreign countries would not keep up prices so long as they found a market for their corn; and, seeing the advantages of manufactures, could it be doubted, that they would foster and encourage them by every means in their power? But suppose the Corn-laws abolished, what would be the effect on the labourers of England? Why, that instead of this country consuming corn produced by British labourers, they would have to depend for their supplies on the Polish serfs. They would run the chance of throwing out of cultivation large tracts of land; and if such a thing were to take place, what, he asked their Lordships' would become of the English labourers? The agitation of this question, and the violent speeches which had been made upon the subject, had prevented men from attempting to improve their land; and he thought his noble Friend would admit, that while this agitation continued, capital would not be employed in this way, and that the labouring population must consequently suffer severely. He was surprised to hear his noble Friend say, that farming in England was not so good as it ought to be, but he was not a good sample of a British farmer when he could hold such an opinion as that when land was thrown out of wheat, its cultivation would be laid down in grass. The truth seemed to be, that his noble Friend knew little about either in this country or in Scotland. He believed, that this was a landlord's, a farmer's and an agricultural labourer's question, and he also believed, that it was a question in which both the operatives and the manufacturers were equally concerned. If these laws should unfortunately be repealed, the consequences would be as destructive to the manufacturing as to any other interest, and if the effect of such a step would be bad in England, what would it be in Ireland, where thousands depended for employment on agriculture? The agricultural interest paid a larger proportion of taxation than any other interest in the country, and if they were to change place with the manufacturers, and call for a reduction of their profits of from twenty to thirty per cent., what, he should like to know, would be said of them? Why, it would be said, that they who were taxed could not compete with those who were not taxed. He heartily concurred in the motion of the noble Duke, and he should perform his duty better by supporting that motion than by giving his sanction to such nibbling as the noble Lord advocated. For himself he could only say, that if protection were not afforded to agriculture he would rather transfer his capital to another country, where, with skilful labourers and machinery, he could render it profitable, than allow it to remain where he could hope for no benefit to accrue from it.

The Earl of *Radnor*, in explanation, said he had said nothing from which the noble Duke had a right to infer, that if the Corn-laws were repealed, the labourers of this country would be reduced to the necessity of eating barley bread. The noble Duke seemed to think, that if protection were taken away, and this country had to depend on foreign countries for corn, the labourers would be reduced to the extremity of resorting to barley bread; but that was not the argument which he had used. What he had said was, suppose that to be so, and that wheat could not be obtained, why then that barley, of which there had been no importation, would be no bad thing for the population to fall back upon, especially when barley bread would be accompanied by good butter and cheese, and roast beef and plum pudding. [*Great Laughter.*] Noble Lords laughed; but he saw no absurdity in this.

The Duke of *Richmond* said, he had not heard of the roast beef and plum pudding before! but the noble Lord had forgotten to state how the plum pudding was to be made, and whether it was to consist of barley flour.

Viscount *Melbourne*. My Lords, I feel that I ought not to vote on such an important subject without saying a few words in explanation of the course which I mean to take. Though on the subject under your Lordships' consideration, I can hope to add nothing new to the discussion which has already taken place, and being less familiar with it than with other subjects, I feel that it is not in my power to add to your Lordships' information, or to throw any new light on a subject which has been so amply considered. My Lords, a great deal of observation has been made in the course of the present debate, on the conduct pursued by a right hon. Friend and colleague of mine, who is understood to have expressed in another place, that he was not displeased at the subject having at length been brought under discussion. My Lords, I do not hesitate to say to your Lordships, that I entertain a strong objection to the agitation of this subject; but then I cannot help thinking, that agitation is nothing more than a modern word to express public discussion or public feeling in the way that it has always been expressed in this country. My Lords, my right hon. Friend seems to be of opinion, that the subject is of very great importance to commerce—that commercial interests are deeply involved in it, and, therefore, so far from thinking, that the course which he has taken is open to surprise or anything but candid remark, I see nothing improper in his having declared, that he was satisfied at finding, that his hon. Friend had brought forward such a motion, and made observations which amounted to nothing more than the expression of his wish, that the truth might be discovered. I must say, my Lords, with respect to the whole discussion, considering the delicate nature of the subject, and the interests and feelings which it touches, that it does not surprise me, that some degree of violence and indulgence in bitter reflections should have been used on the one side as well as upon the other. On the whole, I cannot look at the debates which have taken place as either intemperate or violent discussions; and I do not think, therefore, that what has occurred can in any manner endanger either the public peace or security of the country. My Lords, it is perfectly natural, considering the position in which my right hon. Friend stands with regard to the commercial interests of the country, that he should have expressed himself as he has done. My Lords, I do not hesitate to say, that I differ from my right hon. Friend on this subject; that I am extremely sorry this question has been agitated and brought under discussion, because it was of a peculiarly unpleasant and disagreeable nature, setting as it did one class in array against another, and producing invidious and bitter reflections, which would be much better avoided. My Lords, I say I am extremely sorry this question should be agitated at the present moment. I am sorry that any parties in the country should take advantage of a temporary high price of provisions for the purpose of promoting their desire with respect to a repeal of the Corn-laws. My Lords, I know it would be in vain to appeal to their forbearance. The discussion is therefore unavoidable, because we are all aware, that when persons have an object to serve, they will seize every opportunity which presents itself, of urging it forward at the time which appears to them to be the most convenient and suitable to the purpose. The noble Lord has on the present occasion adverted to a matter of importance which was noticed in the debate of last Session, and that is the impolicy of this country being left in a state of dependence on foreign nations for an unlimited supply of corn. A noble and learned Lord, however, took this argument up, and asserted, that it had been long since exploded and refuted. My Lords, I own I am not entirely satisfied, that this is the case—or that it would be wise or expedient to subject this country to the caprice or whim either of the Government or the Legislature of any foreign country. I cannot, however, say, that I agree in that opinion of the noble and learned Lord. I will suppose that we were in a situation, "in which, by the way, no country is, or ever was, or ever will be;" but for the sake of argument I will assume the possibility of our being in a situation in which we might legislate with a *tabula rasa,* a blank sheet of paper before us. I will suppose, that we had no interests to protect, and, that we were told, that this was to be a great manufacturing country, great in wealth, in prosperity, and in population, and I should even then very much doubt whether it would be wise to establish laws which must make a large manufacturing population dependent upon foreign countries for a supply of corn. But when I consider the situation in which we stand, when I consider the various and complicated interests which we have to protect, when I consider the peculiar nature of our financial position, and find my noble Friend proposing to leave the whole agricultural interest without protection, I declare before God that I think it the wildest and maddest scheme, that has ever entered into the imagination of man to conceive. The real fact was, that the manufacturers lay very much in velvet upon this. "Oh"; said they, "throw away all duties, we do not want protection, but however for God's sake, take care the public revenue does not fall off." But they knew very well, that they were perfectly safe in throwing down the gauntlet and saying, that they were quite ready to part with protecting duties. My noble Friend behind me, the Earl of Radnor, said, "Suppose you have a great deal of corn from foreign countries. Your demand creates a supply, and gives growth to a great interest there, and if the sovereigns of those countries attempt to prohibit the exportation of corn, they will never be permitted to do so by their own people." But who could recollect what this generation had seen, and entertain such views for an instant? We know not what may be done by the caprice or ambition of an individual? Who, in 1792, ever thought of hearing of the Berlin and Milan decrees, the measures which Buonaparte adopted, and of seeing the remorseless application of the means placed at the disposal of one man to ruin the trade of this country. It is, my Lords, in my humble opinion, not a desirable thing for us to be dependent for our nourishment on foreign supplies, and I think it would be wise even to sacrifice something of commercial prosperity to the national safety and independence. This, my Lords, is my strong feeling, and I have great doubt whether our commerce has not been increased by our agricultural prosperity. I entirely agree, my Lords, with my noble Friend, that any change in the present system would be an evil; and if the effect of the agitation of this subject has been as the noble Duke observed, to interfere with the employment of capital, and the improvement and sales of lands, I am ready to confess, that I think it is better that we should make no alteration. With respect to the resolution of my noble Friend I cannot, my Lords, vote for its adoption, but still I am bound to say, that I should have preferred meeting it with the previous question, to meeting it with a direct negative. Unquestionably the facts stated in the resolution of my noble Friend are not true, and not thinking, that such a proceeding should appear on the journals of your Lordships' House, I must, if it be pressed, give my vote for the motion of the noble Duke. In my opinion, the resolution of my noble Friend condemns the present law, without substituting anything for it; and although steadiness in the price of corn may be a great thing, still it is not so essential to the country as to justify the adoption of a proposition of this kind. If prices be steadily high, the poor have a difficulty in obtaining bread; and, if steadily low, the land is thrown out of cultivation; and that, certainly my Lords, is not a consummation which I wish. I say, therefore, my Lords, that the resolution of my noble Friend is incomplete; and my reason for voting against it is, that I think it is not only unwise but inefficient—that it does nothing, in short, while it condemns the present system. My Lords, I am not prepared to pledge myself to say, whether the existing Corn-laws are the best that can be adopted, or whether they ought to be annihilated; but, thinking the course taken by my noble Friend imprudent, I cannot adopt his proposition.

Lord *Brougham* had hoped that he should not have felt it necessary to address their Lordships on the present occasion, but when he looked back at the whole debate which had taken place, he felt an irresistible and over-whelming temptation to call on their Lordships to reflect on the manner in which they had treated his motion for hearing evidence at the bar of the House, and to that temptation he at once abandoned himself. [*Laughter.*] Their Lordships might laugh; but he doubted whether they would laugh two minutes by the clock, unless indeed it were matter of laughter and merriment to statesmen, and individuals calling themselves legislators, that they had placed themselves in a position unheard of before for a dereliction of the sacred duties they owed to their country. If that were a matter of self congratulation, they might enjoy their merriment, and hug themselves in their own complacency. His motion was for inquiry into alleged facts to be proved by evidence at the bar; and he had called upon their Lordships either to admit those facts, to assert that they were incapable of proof, or to affirm they were utterly immaterial and deserved no investigation. The investigation, however, was denied by their Lordships, who had turned a deaf ear to the petitions of the people. He could have established on oath, every fact which he had alleged; but it was otherwise with the noble Earl, for all that he had stated was denied, not only by the noble Duke but by two other noble Lords, indeed the noble Lord who had brought forward statements against the proposition of the noble Earl differed so completely in their facts, that it was no very difficult matter to controvert them. Was that or was it not an argument for inquiry? Was it or was it not a reason for making their Lordships regret negativing without a division his motion on Monday three weeks? Was it or was it not a reason for making their Lordships pause and reflect on their conduct three weeks ago, and for making them begin at least to suspect that it was barely possible that there might be more ground for the proposition for inquiry than they seemed to admit? But, above all, let him remind them of the position in which they were now placed, and, compared with which, that was, in his opinion, a proud, rational, consistent, and dignified position in which they appeared last Monday three weeks. They were actually, and it was hardly credible, about to vote by a large majority, a majority on which they plumed themselves—yes! they were exulting in the expectation of an instantaneous triumph—but a triumph, he must remind them, over themselves—a triumph over their own character as men of sense and consistency, as he should presently demonstrate—ay, and demonstrate to their own satisfaction. He had thought their Lordships at least knew the meaning of the English language, but it was now plainly proved that they did not. It appeared that their Lordships were even under-read in their own tongue. He said so with the greatest possible respect; but he used the word "satisfaction" to mean that he would prove it so that it could not be denied. He did not mean that it would be very pleasant to their Lordships; but he would prove, if they preferred it, to their own conviction—to the perfect conviction of their Lordships—that they were about to place themselves in this position—they had refused an inquiry, they would not go into committee, they had rejected the tendered evidence, they would not allow witnesses to be examined, they had rejected his motion, they had hooted it from that House, though that motion was for permission to prove the facts of the case or to have them disproved, because if the allegations which he and those who thought with him had made were incorrect, they might have been disproved. That was all his motion went to, and that they had refused. Well, they rejected proof, they refused the evidence tendered, they would not allow witnesses to be examined, they preferred to be in darkness on the facts of the case rather than to be enlightened by the evidence which was offered, and yet they were now ready, on these disputed and most important facts, to do what? To inquire now? to decide now whether those were right who affirmed, or those who denied, the existence of certain facts? No such thing; but to vote on one side of that disputed proposition of mere fact. That was what they were about to do. Was that the conduct of rational men? And he did not think that it made an irrational act more rational because they laughed who had been convicted of that irrationality. He was old-fashioned enough to think directly the reverse. The noble Viscount who spoke last had felt the absurdity of the position in which they had placed themselves—he felt what he was about to do—he knew that he was about to vote that which was not true, in fact; that was an awkwardness which he felt, and it would have been a relief to him, as he candidly confessed, if the noble Duke had, as he was once minded, moved the previous question; but, said the noble Viscount, "I am not very nice; that is, I am not very nice whether I affirm by my solemn vote as a Peer of Parliament what in point of fact is not true." It came to this, the noble Viscount had declared "one party said one thing, another party another. I don't know which is right; whether the facts on the one side or the other are proved or disproved I care not, I shall vote one way." Now, some men were more and others less nice; but this was the least possible degree of nicety—which he had ever heard of any one, particularly a Minister of State, being troubled with. He knew that nothing he could say would egg their Lordships back from the course which they were pursuing—the headlong course which he thought without reflection, they were pursuing; still it was his duty—he used no threats, and he had heard none used that night—still it was his duty to warn their Lordships, without any threat, that it was a course which rational men ought not to wish to be recorded to after-times, or to be seen in their own age; that all men would not hold these matters so lightly; all men would not laugh at the inconsistency of their conduct, who, having refused inquiry and proof as to disputed facts, yet decided on the subject matter of these facts; all men would not be so little nice as to the conduct of others as some men were as to their own. It was very easy for persons not to be nice as to their own conduct, but not so easy to induce others to be the same; and, as all men could not see their conduct in the same light as it appeared to their own eyes, he could assure them that that Assembly which he then had the honour to address was the only place in the whole of England, Scotland, and Wales in which precisely the same satisfaction would be felt with regard to the conduct upon which they all seemed to congratulate themselves so much. He had heard to-night the most extraordinary arguments used on the other side both by the noble Duke and the noble Earl—the grossest, if he might be allowed, without disrespect, to use the term, the most singular and unintelligible misstatement of facts which he had ever heard on any great question. It was no business of his to defend the statements of any Minister in another place; his colleagues who had spoken had not thought it necesary to do so; yet common charity, common benevolence, when one person—a brother colleague—was rudely assailed for anything he had said might be expected to operate, and those feelings had operated on his mind to induce him to say a word on behalf of a misrepresented and misjudged, not misjudging, individual; and he did so more readily because he totally differed in opinion from that right hon. Gentleman, as that right hon. Gentleman differed from other Members of the Government who had various shades of difference amongst themselves and did not appear to be very nice or discriminating. But so far did he differ from that right hon. Gentleman that he thought that anything was better than a fixed duty. It was the greatest absurdity; it was a monstrous, extravagant, and absurd proposition. He should like to see the man who would venture to propose it; and still more he should like to see the Minister who, if the price of corn got up to 90*s*., would dare to keep up a fixed duty and convert a scarcity into a famine. What Minister would venture to say, "The price of corn is 90*s*.; I'll make it 10*s*. more?" It was impossible. If Parliament were sitting at the time when there were such prices the standing orders would be immediately suspended, and by an unanimous vote they would allow the importation of foreign corn duty free; but if Parliament at such a time were in vacation, an order of Council and a bill of indemnity would be the consequence; and therefore, to talk of a fixed duty, which they must know that they could not maintain, was the greatest and most monstrous extravagance. However, he agreed in most of what had been said by his right hon. Friend. He subscribed to his statement of facts and to the opinions which he founded on these facts, but his noble Friend opposite had entirely mistaken the drift of their argument. Their argument was, that the effect of the Corn-law being to raise the price of labour in England, and to lower it on the Continent unnaturally, whether that was effected in three or in thirty years it mattered not, the effect was, that our own manufacturers had to undergo a cruel inequality in the competition with foreigners. That was the drift of the argument; and one of the answers was, that other countries, that France for instance, had a Corn-law. Why, that made no difference. Suppose France had a Corn-law, how did that alter the case,—how did that remove the ground of their complaint that the Corn-law here gave a benefit to the foreigner over our own manufacturer? Then, again, it was said, that no grain was exported from Saxony, and therefore the argument did not apply to the hosiery of Saxony; but how did that affect the argument? They went to Poland with their hosiery, and in the market of Poland, therefore, they interfered with our manufactures, and Saxony and Poland got manufactures considerably lower than we could supply them. So it was said in Switzerland, and then the case came nearer to the argument; but what they contended was, that over the whole surface of Europe the effect of the Corn-law was to make the price of corn abroad fall below the ordinary level, and to raise the price in our markets above that level, and that the consequence was to subject them to the greatest evil, injustice, and hardship in all the markets, where they had to contend with an unfair and unequal competition. Besides, the noble Lords forgot that the market of the Baltic had only grain and timber to give; and if we would not take their timber because of our Canadian possessions, nor would take their grain, they had nothing to give in exchange, and therefore could not take our manufactures. He only now ran over these topics slightly, because he had already stated his opinion on the subject, and he was aware of the lateness of the hour. The noble Duke had said that there were no Corn-laws in Dantzic. To be sure, no more than there was a sugar law in Jamaica; and why? Because there was no importation of corn into Dantzic, of sugar into Jamaica, or of coals into Newcastle—but did they believe that our Corn-law had no effect on the Dantzic market? The fluctuations which they found in that market arose from our Corn-law. Our market was as much the market of Poland as Dantzic was the market of the more remote districts of that country. The noble Duke on the cross bench (Richmond), with whom he always entered into controversy with feelings of the greatest respect, had expressed the same sentiments as he had broached the other night, incidentally on the presentation of a petition, when the noble Duke referred to a resolution passed by a body called the Chamber of Commerce in Glasgow. He had since that made some inquiries about that resolution, and he would give their Lordships briefly the history of the body from which it emanated. This Chamber was founded in Mr. Pitt's time, in the year 1785, and amongst its original resolutions he found one which stated, "that it shall be a particular object of the foundation and of the exertions of this Chamber to exercise a control over and to protect the manufacturer and the trader from the operation of the Corn-law." Now, as the best institutions fell off from the objects of their establishment, and as sinister motives and interests interfered with the well-working of the best establishments, by backslidings innumerable, though chiefly confined to the last few years, this Chamber had come into the hands of a few individuals, who elected themselves. That resolution was the resolution of the directors, who were thirty in number, of whom one-sixth part (five) went out annually, and the remaining twenty-five, by always voting together, secured the re-election of the other five. So certain was that, that nobody ever thought of attending; and at the last election fifteen only were present. Consequently, the Chamber was entirely in the hands of those individuals, who, though no doubt they had interests as traders, had much greater zeal and interests as politicians. They were most pure Conservatives, that was to say, they were of the most pure principles in politics — the noble Duke would understand what he meant —and they thought it a better thing to pass that resolution than to keep to the original direction of the institution for the purpose of protecting the manufacturers from the Corn-laws. That was the history of this resolution; it was in the very teeth of one passed shortly before by the same body; and that resolution itself did not purport to be final—it did not agree with the requisitionists—but it expressly stated, that if they would bring forward any definite proposition, that proposition would be taken into consideration by the Chamber. But he had now a more important thing to come to—the noble Duke's own opinion, which was more consistent and generally of greater weight; and the noble Duke said, if there was to be free trade in corn, let there be free trade in all other commodities. He was furnished with an answer to that from all the respectable delegates who were here, and who were not, as had been stated that night, a few great mill-owners, as he was ready to show, or would have shown if they had allowed him to produce proof; but let them look at the leading man amongst them, his excellent friend Mr. Sturge, of Birmingham. What was he? He was a corn-merchant—and he supported the repeal, not for the purpose of lowering the price. But the noble Duke had forgotten his argument the other night; he has argued that the effect of the Corn-laws was to cramp and stifle the corn trade, which was declared by the Legislature in its own Act to be an object worthy of encouragement. Then he came to the unanimous resolution not only of corn-dealers and millowners, but of dyers, calico-printers, and manufacturers of every kind, calling not only for a repeal of the Corn-laws and for free trade in grain, but for the repeal of all protecting duties whatever, and for free trade in all commodities which they now pretended to protect and encourage. They had come unanimously to that resolution, and upon no other ground would they ask or accept the alteration of the present law. But, said the noble Duke, and with him other noble Lords, there were taxes, besides the protecting duties, which pressed heavily and unfairly on the land. Now, as that was the only part of the subject which he had previously left untouched, and as it was a matter which had been very much dwelt upon both there and out of doors, he would stop to say one word on the subject, and it was the last with which he was about to trouble their Lordships. He denied the proposition of fact, that these taxes did fall on the land; and he trusted that he should be able shortly to prove to them that those taxes were not paid by the land. Now, to grapple at first with the strength of the noble Duke's argument, he would single out the malt tax, and he denied that the malt tax was paid by the land. He even took the land tax itself, and the Poor-law, which came nearer to the case than any other; and he said, that to talk of the five millions and upwards which was raised by the malt tax as being paid by the farmer or the landlord, or as falling on the land, except so far as the landlords were consumers, was about as rational as to say that his noble Friend near him (the Marquess of Sligo), who was a Jamaica planter, paid the tax on sugar. He might suffer by it —it might tend to diminish his profits—but the consumers here paid the tax; for the tax which was laid on the producer in the first instance was thrown by him on the commodity, and paid by the consumer. That was a proposition which admitted of no dispute. Suppose a bale of cotton yarn were taxed; suppose that, with a degree of madness which could hardly be found to have seized any brain, the bale of cotton twist were taxed *5l.*, what would be the consequence? Did the Manchester cotton-spinner pay that? No; he laid it on the price of the materials, and instead of *5l.* he laid on 10*l.*, because he must first be recompensed for the additional expenditure occasioned by the tax itself, and next for the diminution in the consumption; so that when a tax was laid on sugar and rum the consumers of these commodities in this country paid for that tax. The malt tax was paid by those who drank the beer, and by the unhappy wretches who consumed the gin. Not one of those miserable phantoms who were to be seen entering the gin palaces which abounded in this city, to the injury of their fortunes, to the ruin of their health, and to the degradation of their character, and the reducing them almost to the level of the brutes that perish—not one of these miserable phantoms who did not contribute to pay that tax. Let them talk no longer of the landlord and the farmer as being the only persons on whom these taxes were burdensome. He went over these points lightly, not because he undervalued their importance, for he thought that they went to the very root of the whole question, but because he was sure with intelligent men a mere allusion to them was sufficient to make them understood. He said the land tax also was not paid by the land, and he had a high authority on that subject. Their Lordships were aware of the great school of political economy which had given rise to all the great improvements which had been recently made in that science—he meant the school of Quesnay—who had introduced such improvements into all branches of civil polity, but who went into schemes too theoretical, which were, however, afterwards filtered through the practical hands of Smith and others. To that school, thus altered and purified of its extravagances, a great statesman, universally beloved and admired, and for whose great talents and noble eloquence he had always the highest admiration—who had nothing mean in his feelings, principles, or propensities, any more than he had anything even moderate in his views, from which he widely differed—a man who was used to be most highly respected—he meant the late Mr. Pitt—became a convert, a disciple, and, practically, an apostle of that school; and it was one of the doctrines of that school, that there ought to be no tax but a land tax; and did Quesnay, the founder of that school, or Mirabeau, who had adopted it, or Turgot, the Minister, who was a convert and an apostle of that school in that country, as Mr. Pitt was to its mitigated form in this—did those individuals—did M. Turgot, for instance, who was prepared to act on that doctrine, really believe that were he, as he intended to do, to abolish all other taxes, except a land tax, then all the taxes would be paid by the land? This doctrine was as irrational as those other doctrines in political economy were sound. Their doctrine was, to establish a *despotisme legale*, but they had no wish to suppress the landed interest. They wished to resolve every tax into a land-tax, because they held that it must be succeeded by the *repartition*, and that every one who used bread would pay the tax. Last of all, the advocates of the Corn-law talked of the poor rate. He denied that the land paid all the poor rate. The manufacturer and the inhabitant of the town paid their share. Let them look at Lancashire and the other manufacturing districts, and see what a proportion was paid there. Suppose a man who was proprietor of a mill worth a thousand pounds a-year chose to occupy it, and make a profit of 9,000*l.* a-year, he was rated only for his profits; but so was the farmer also. If their Lordships rejected this resolution he should divide the House on the question of going into committee to inquire what was expedient to be done with respect to the Corn-laws.

A *Noble Lord* asked the noble and learned Lord what remedy he proposed for the Irish population, who would be thrown out of employment by an alteration in the Corn-laws?

Lord *Brougham* said, that such a question was extremely irregular, and the only way to meet it would be to give the noble

Lord no answer at all. However, he would tell the noble Lord what his opinion was. It was true, there was no part of the empire whose interests ran so little risk of being neglected in that House as Ireland, because, although he did not grudge it, it appeared to him that nine out of ten days any time during the last twenty years had been occupied with Irish interests. He should just as soon expect, what was almost a miracle, that the interests of Scotland would be neglected.

The Marquess of *Lansdowne* said, that if the noble Duke opposite had not withdrawn his motion of the previous question, he should not have been obliged to address their Lordships in order to explain the vote which he was about to give. He felt bound, however, to state, that if he voted against the motion of his noble Friend, it would not be because he wished to preclude the present or any other Government from considering at any time whether it might be expedient to substitute a more efficacious and less objectionable form of protection to the agriculturists of this country than that which now existed, if any such could be found, but because he saw no convenience or advantage in entertaining this question now without being prepared to follow it up by the substitution of some other mode of protection, which the advocates of the motion did not appear prepared to propose, as he might fairly conclude, from the silence studiously observed on that subject. They certainly appeared unprepared to propose such a system, and that must arise either from the impossibility of doing so, or from a total disagreement as to what the system should be. The noble Earl behind him had said, that he should vote in favour of this motion only as a first step; but had he said what his second step would be? How could he, therefore, vote for the first step, without knowing what the second was, which was proposed to be taken? He could not entertain any such proceeding. The objections he felt to this motion were, that if it implied an insulated repeal, it involved consequences which could not be contemplated without apprehension — namely, that there should be no Corn-law whatever, and that the utmost competition of the foreign grower should be allowed against the home grower, instead of the latter sharing that amount of protection to which the producers of all commodities were entitled. To remove the present system of Corn-laws would be to grant a bounty on all applications of capital, except that which was applied to land. Had any Government of this country ever sanctioned a proposition so monstrously absurd as this — that capital was to be forced from application to land, and diverted into every other channel? To take such a course, would be to subvert that system from which the country had derived so much benefit — the application of capital to the progresssive improvement of land. As to the other proposition that had been alluded to—namely, that protection should be withdrawn from the manufactures of the country, he fully concurred in what had been said by a noble Earl, his noble Friend (the Earl of Ripon) opposite—that the thing would be altogether impracticable. The produce of our manufactories, as well as of the land, were in an artificial state of taxation; the country istelf was involved in financial trammels, which, though they impeded, he thanked God, did not arrest, its progress; and, of course, all our produce, whether of agriculture or manufactures, were more or less affected by them. Now, when noble Lords talked of removing that financial pressure from any one, or from all, of the articles of our produce, he should like to be informed how the deficiency which would be thus created in our revenue would be supplied. Let noble Lords who took a different view of this question, from that which he did, show him the source from which the deficiency in the revenue was to be made up, and he would then go into the consideration of the subject; until that should be done, he must object to any proposition which would tend to remove that protection which every article of our produce enjoyed. It was said, that land was less taxed than any other property to which capital was applied. If it could be shown, that it gave a greater share of protection or a greater exemption from taxation, he would admit, that it would be a fair ground for a further consideration of the subject. Under all the circumstances, and there being no substitute proposed for the present law, he must say, that he could not vote for a proposition so indefinite as that before the House. Whenever a definite and tangible proposition should be brought forward, he should be be disposed to give it his best consideration. He must say, however, that if a resolution were proposed, that the present Corn-law had created steady prices, or prevented fluctuations, he could not vote in the affirmative of that proposition; and if it could be shown, the law had a different effect, that it had caused prices to fluctuate and be unsteady then he admitted, it might be worth while to consider whether some means might not be devised to remedy that evil. It might happen, that the application of too great an artificial stimulus to the production of corn, so as to come up to the full consumption of the country, might, by being continued, create an overflow in the market, for which the comparative cheapness of other countries would afford no vent without a ruinous fall of price, and from the injurious effects of which the farmer would not recover for years—a circumstance which would be worse to him than the occasional introduction of some hundred thousand, nay, or even a million quarters of foreign corn. In conclusion, he would observe, that he should feel satisfied if due protection were extended to all the great interests of the country; more he should not desire. If any partiality were shown to the landed interest beyond any other, it must in the first instance, recoil on that interest itself, and that would react unfavourably on the manufacturing interest, for the two were so interwoven and connected that it was impossible the one could be seriously injured, without affecting the other.

The Marquess of *Northampton* was understood to say, that he objected to the principle, that because a committee was asked for, it must therefore be granted. It should not be given unless some ground had been laid for it, something definite proposed. Unless that were done, the going into a committee would be only a waste of public time, which would be better bestowed in attention to the important public business of the country. What the House was prepared to affirm by its vote was he thought this, that the noble Earl had not proved his case—but they would not say that a counter case had been proved.

Lord *Brougham* maintained, that whoever negatived the proposition of his noble Friend (Lord Fitzwilliam) must affirm the contrary.

Earl *Fitzwilliam*, in reply, said this subject must come before the consideration of Parliament, which must lead to some new modelling of this law. A part of his noble Friend's (Lord Lansdowne's) speech had supplied many of the deficiencies in his (Lord Fitwilliam's) speech. In describing the difficulties in which the agricultural interest was placed, what in common parlance they should call the blessing of consecutive abundant harvests became, according to his noble friend, the curse of plenty. The price of corn in this country was such that when you had this curse of plenty upon you, it operated as a curse. The farmers of England reaped no benefit from the price which corn obtained in this country over every other. They could not have the advantage of exporting the article which they reaped in such abundance. This was one of the great evils of the system, and one from which they could not escape, so long as they were pleased to keep up the protecting duty on corn. With regard to the question of the noble Marquess opposite, as to how those who wished to alter the Corn-laws meant to provide for Ireland, he could only say that he had as great an interest in the prosperity of Ireland as anybody could have. But it appeared to him that they took their own fears and apprehensions, as he thought a great many other persons did, to reason upon, instead of reasoning upon facts. The assumption, of course, was, that the effect of altering the Corn-laws would be exceedingly detrimental to Ireland. He had desired in an early part of the evening a definition of what Ireland meant, because it did not mean the interests of the landlords of Ireland, but it meant what was the interest of the great mass of the population. He believed, that no change in the Corn-laws would inflict any evil upon the population of Ireland. One of the great evils of Ireland was, that good food, which might be called luxurious food, was beyond the reach of the population of Ireland, and was mainly put beyond their reach by its price. Let them lower the price of grain, and the people of Ireland were not so enamoured of potatoes but that they would eat bread if they could. But that the landlords of Ireland might have their rents reduced by it was just possible; though on that point he was not at all satisfied.

Their Lordships divided:—Content 14, Proxies 10—24; Not-Content 111, Proxies 113—224: Majority 200.

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Abinger
Ashburton
Carew

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Thursday, March 14, 1839.

MINUTES.] Petitions presented. By Messrs. Hale, Grant, Barneby, Maunsell, Pringle, Blennerhasset, Goddard, Miles, Halford, and Handley, Lords Cole, Dalmeny, G. Somerset, and Norreys, Viscounts Grimston, Clive, and Ingestrie, and Sir E. Filmer, from a number of places, against the Repeal of the Corn-laws.—By Messrs. Bannerman, F. Dundas, Lascelles, Ellice, jun., R. Currie, Lords Morpeth, and G. Lennox, Sir Charles Burrell, Sir H. Parnell, and Sir John Seale, from a number of places, for the Repeal of the Corn-laws.—By Mr. Gladstone, from the Church of England Lay Association, by Sir Charles Burrell, from the Rural Deanery of Broadwater, by Sir Robert Inglis, from the Clergy of Winchester, against the Ecclesiastical Duties and Revenues Bill.—By Mr. Wallace, from Perth, for a Uniform Penny Postage. —By Mr. Hale, from four places, by Sir R. Inglis, from several places, and Mr. Bagge, from several places in Norfolk, against any system of National Education not founded on the Scriptures.—By Mr. O'Connell, from several places, for Justice to Ireland, or Repeal of the Union.—By Lord Dungannon, from Durham, for Church Extension in Canada.—By Sir Robert Inglis, and Mr. Goulburn, from several places, to the same effect.—By Sir G. Sinclair, from Caithness, and Mr. Lockhart, from Ross, and Lanark, and Mr. F. W. Grant, from Banffshire, for Church Extension in Scotland.—By an hon. Member, from Connaught, against the existing system of Education in Ireland.—By Mr. Blennerhasset, from the county of Kerry, and Mr. O'Connell, from Dublin, in favour of the Government system of Railroads in Ireland.—By Mr. Brady, from Connaught, against the Report of the Irish Railway Commission.—By Mr. Fox Maule, from two places, in favour of, and by Sir Henry Parnell, from Dundee, against the Prisons (Scotland) Bill.—By Sir W. Somerville, from Drogheda, for Improving the Criminal Law.—By Mr. F. Egerton, from the Board of Guardians of a place in Cheshire, for Amending the New Poor-law Act with regard to Affiliation.

CANADA—EXECUTIONS.] Mr. *O'Connell* would ask a question of great importance of the hon. Gentleman, the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies. According to the accounts which had been received in this country there had been thirty-four persons hanged in Upper and Lower Canada, and he wished to know whether the Government had received any information upon this point, and next, whether it was their intention to take any steps to put a stop to these executions?

Mr. *Labouchere* regretted, that they had received no information at the Colonial-office with regard to the accounts which had appeared in the newspapers of several persons having been executed in Upper and Lower Canada, in addition to the communications which had already been stated to the House. By some circumstances, for which he could not account, the Great Western had not brought any dispatches from the Governor of Upper or Lower Canada. The Government, therefore, had no information, except such as was derived from the newspapers. As to the hon. and learned Gentleman's second question, "whether it was the intention of the Government to take any steps to put a stop to the executions in Canada?" he begged to say, that upon every occasion on which either Lord Glenelg, or the Marquess of Normanby, had adverted to this painful subject in the dispatches to either governor, no opportunity had been lost of expressing the strong feelings of the Government on the advisability of confining to the smallest number possible, consistently with the due protection of the lives and property of her Majesty's loyal subjects, the use of capital punishments in those colonies. When he said this, however, he must, in justice to the gallant officers who were the governors of those colonies under circumstances of no ordinary difficulty, say, that he trusted the House would not imply that there was any doubt on the minds of her Majesty's Ministers, or that any communications had passed from which it could be inferred, that those gallant officers did not feel precisely as the Queen's Government felt upon this subject; and he was bound to say, also, that in every communication from Sir John Colborne and Sir George Arthur, it appeared, that they were carrying out their duty with feelings worthy of their high personal and professional character; that it was to them a reluctant and a painful duty; and that, in the exercise of their powers, they entertained a just and conscientious conviction of the sad and severe necessity imposed upon them to act as they had for the sake of the protection of the colonies committed to their charge.

Subject dropped.

CORN-LAWS—ADJOURNED DEBATE—(THIRD NIGHT).] On the Order of the Day for resuming the debate on the Corn-laws,

Lord *Worsley* said, that when he considered that this was the third night of the present debate, he thought, that he should not shew due respect to the House if he detained it for a long time, not only because he could not presume to offer much that was valuable, but because, also, although they had had two days' debate, if he detained the House for any lengthened period, he would run the chance of protracting the debate to another night. There were, however, some parts of the question which had not been touched upon, and which, as he thought, were very important. When the mover of the present question, the hon. Member for Wolverhampton, introduced it to the House, he declared that the House, upon a recent occasion, and on the same subject, had decided the motion without due consideration; but he voted in the majority on that occasion, because it was acknowledged, that the repeal of the Corn-laws was the real object of the motion for hearing evidence, and he was decidedly of opinion, that the repeal of these laws would be detrimental to all the interests of the country, whether agricultural or commercial. The hon. Gentleman had told the House, that the advocates of the Corn-laws exaggerated through their fears the injury they would receive from their repeal, but he, on the other hand, thought that the manufacturers were at least as greatly exaggerating the benefits which they would receive if the laws were altered. It was stated also by the hon. Gentleman, the Member for Wolverhampton, that the advocates of these laws in that House acted through fear; now he did not know to what fears the hon. Gentleman alluded, unless it was the fear which might be entertained by hon. Members of voting against the wishes of their constituents; and if this were what was intended, the observation could not apply to himself, for he thought, that the House would recollect he last year voted for the corn-grinding bill introduced by the hon. Member for Dartmouth, which was a question on which he differed from his constituents, and although the hon. Member for Wolverhampton stated the other night, that the farmers were an ignorant class, and that they did not dare to express their opinions, yet, if that hon. Gentleman had been with him after the vote he had last year given, he would have found that they were a very different class from what they were represented, and that they did dare to express their own opinions. Although, therefore, he did not in that case hesitate, and would not on any other occasion hesitate, to vote contrary to the opinions of his constituents if he thought that they were decidedly wrong, yet if he had the misfortune to differ from a large majority of his constituents on what they considered a most vital question, as they did the alteration of the Corn-laws, he thought that he would only do his duty in resigning his seat, and again offering himself, that they might have an opportunity of deciding if they would re-elect him when they knew those opinions, which it might be fairly presumed they were not aware of when they elected him. It so happened, however, that upon the present question his own views and the opinions of his constituents perfectly coincided. It had been said, in the debate of last night by the noble Lord the Member for Northumberland (Viscount Howick), that there was no doubt that the labourers were now in great distress, and that it was impossible for their wages to rise with the rise in the price of corn; he thought, however, that he would be able to prove not only that the labourers' wages had been raised to a sum equal to the rise in the price of corn, but that they were actually now receiving better wages than could be required by any increase in the value of bread. He would prove this to the House by reading a statement which he had received from an authentic source. The noble Lord read the following paper.

One quarter of the best wheat will yield about 28 stones of flour after the miller's toll has been taken.

Wheat at 80*s.* per quarter	per stone.
is equal to . .	2*s.* 10½*d.*
— 70*s.* . .	2*s.* 6*d.*
— 60*s.* . .	2*s.* 1½*d.*
— 50*s.* . .	1*s.* 9½*d.*
— 40*s.* . .	1*s.* 5½*d.*
— 35*s.* . .	1*s.* 3*d.*
If a married man with four small children, not able to work, consume two stone of flour per week, the difference of the cost price of their flour between wheat at 35*s.* per quarter and 80*s.* would be . :	per week. 3*s.* 3*d.*
To meet which, a rise in wages ought to be given equal to .	6½*d.*
At no time were the wages lower in Lincolnshire than 8*s.*, and generally they were 10*s.* per week (not because the farmers thought that wheat at 35*s.* per quarter warranted such wages, but because they did not think the labourers could subsist on less), or from 1*s.* 4*d.* to 1*s.* 8*d.* a day, and now they are from 13*s.* 6*d.* to 15*s.* a week, or 2*s.* 3*d.* or 2*s.* 6*d.* a day, making an increase of 5*s.* 6*d.* and 5*s.*, or . .	10*d.* to 11*d.*
Instead of . .	6½*d.*
If you take wheat at 50*s.* and 80*s.*, the difference of the cost of flour to a married man with four	

small children consuming two stone of flour a week, would amount to . .	per week. 2*s.* 2*d.*
To meet that, his wages ought to be raised . .	per day. 4½*d.*
But the difference between wages at 10*s.* and the present wages of 13*s.* 6*d.* and 15*s.* amount to. . . .	7*d.* to 10*d.*
Instead of . .	4½*d.*

This is supposing in each case neither the wife nor children are doing any work. 13*s.* 6*d.* to 15*s.* are the universal wages in the division of Lindsey, and have been generally given since the harvest was finished.

Besides this, at the time the labourers were receiving the low wages, he had received information from a farmer of great respectability, and on whom he could rely, that several labourers were out of employment, and that at the present time, on the contrary, there were no labourers unemployed: and that, indeed, the women and the children could now find work; and during the last winter, out of three unions in Lincolnshire, except in one for a short period, there were no able-bodied labourers out of employment. In his opinion also the repeal of the Corn-laws would be most dangerous, because it was impossible, with the great expense the English farmers were at, for them to grow wheat so cheap as it could be imported from abroad, for he believed, that the price would be much lower than what had been calculated by the advocates of repeal. He was willing to grant that the price abroad might rise in consequence of the demand in England, but he thought that this rise had been much over estimated. He objected to the repeal, therefore, and he objected also to a fixed duty, because it would never answer in practice, and because it could never be enforced.

The following however were the facts of the case as he found them in a

Return of the Price of Wheat, as inserted in 'The London Gazette' for every week in the Year, 1838, and a similar Return for each of the four preceding years,

	a quarter.
It appears that in the months of October, November, and December, 1837, the average price of wheat in England was . . .	53*s.*
And in the months of October, November, and December, 1838, the average price, was . .	72*s.*
Being a variation of . .	19*s.*
In October, November, and December, 1837, good wheat was free on board at Dantzig at . .	28*s.*
Ditto at Stettin and Konigsberg .	26*s.*
Ditto at Kiel, Rostock, Wismar, and Lubeck	25*s.*
Ditto at Hamburg . .	29*s.*
And in December, 1838, and January, 1839, good wheat was free on board at Dantzic at . . .	58*s.*
Ditto at Stettin and Konigsburg .	55*s.*
Ditto at Kiel, Rostock, Wismar and Lubeck	57*s.*
Ditto at Hamburg . .	65*s.*
Being a difference of, at Dantzig .	30*s.*
Ditto at Stettin and Konigsburg .	29*s.*
Ditto at Kiel, Rostock, Wismar, and Lubeck	32*s.*
Ditto at Hamburg . . .	36*s.*

Average freight from Hamburg to Hull, 3*s.* per quarter; from other Baltic ports, 4*s.* 6*d.* to 6*s.*

He was anxious to come to a proper consideration of this question, even without reference to the wishes of his constituents. He had tried to think that the repeal might be for the benefit of the manufacturers, but he had found it impossible to do so. But if this country were to suffer by repeal, what would become of Ireland? She would suffer more. He found by the returns that the import of grain from Ireland had been gradually rising since 1836. He held in his hand a paper which he would read. The noble Lord read the following:—

ACCOUNT OF GRAIN EXPORTED FROM IRELAND TO ENGLAND AND SCOTLAND IN THE YEARS 1836, 1837, AND 1838, ENDING OCTOBER 10.

Year:	Total Quantity of Corn and Grain.	Increase:	
1836 . . .	1,982,968		
1837 . . .	2,075,266 .	37*s.* over 36*s.*	92,298
1838 . . .	2,404,857 .	38*s.* over 37*s.*	329,591
		38*s.* over 36*s.*	421,889

Year.	Total Quantity of Meal and Flour. in Cwts.	Increase:		Decrease.
1836 . . .	2,060,216 .			
1837 . . .	1,901,398 .	. . . .	„	158,818
1838 . . .	2,382,491 .	38*s.* over 37*s.*	481,093	
		38*s.* over 36*s.*	322,275	

In his opinion, the effect of the repeal of the Corn-laws would be to put an end to that importation, and so would be extremely prejudicial to Ireland. Having only last year passed a law for relieving Ireland from the burden of tithes and a law to impose a Poor-rate on that country, it became the House to be very cautious in what way they legislated for that country upon this important subject. An hon. Member the other night had charged the farmers of England with ignorance. He could only suppose that arose from the refusal to answer the long string of questions sent to them by the anti-Corn-law delegates. Some had answered the queries from which it would be seen that the charge of ignorance could not be fairly attributed to them. The farmers had also had queries put to them by the Central Agricultural Society; each was specifically asked how long each had been a farmer, and how long he had occupied his present land, so that there could be no deception, and any one who would look at the replies would find, that the questions were not answered by ignorant men. Although much had been said upon this question by persons anxious for an entirely free trade in corn, and although the noble Lord, the Member for Northumberland, was the only person who had not urged the total repeal, yet from the information he (Lord Worsley) had received, he believed that the number of persons who wished for a repeal was not so large has had been supposed; he believed that even the manufacturers were divided upon the subject, and that very many desired a fixed duty. The hon. Member for Wolverhampton had said, that he had heard many farmers say, that they were against the present system, and so had he, but he had never heard one who wished for a change who did not seek for a fixed duty, and when asked what that duty should be, who did not declare that they could not afford a less duty than 20*s*. What chance, however, had they of obtaining a fixed duty like that. The question was one of great importance to his constituents; he had endeavoured, however, to come to an impartial consideration of it, without special reference to them, and he hoped that it would not be said that because he was against repeal he was afraid to exercise his own opinions.

Sir *Hussey Vivian* having presented several petitions from his constituents against any alteration in the Corn-laws, and feeling that he could not consistently adopt their request, and support their petitions, would be wanting in respect to himself and to them, if he hesitated to express the grounds on which he had formed his opinions. He confessed that nothing had surprised him more than the arguments of the advocates of the Corn-laws. It would be supposed from their speeches that this law was of long standing, that it was perfect, and that the agricultural interest had greatly prospered under it; they seemed to forget that there had been very many years of agricultural distress, that it had often formed subject of comment in speeches from the throne, and that various taxes had been got rid of for the purpose of assisting the agriculturists; and last of all, it would have been supposed that the law had succeeded in what had been stated to have been its object, in the maintenance of this country by the produce of the industry of England, and by our own harvests. Was it not known that even now, were it not for the importation of foreign corn it would be impossible to support our people? The law had given rise to committees to inquire into agricultural distress, and he could not understand on what ground the arguments of those who objected to all inquiry as required by the manufacturers were founded. At any rate, he hoped that if they were not allowed to go into committee, they would never hear again of agricultural distress. He thought that the agriculturists could hardly come to that House praying it to inquire into agricultural distress after the rejection of the motion for a committee advocated by the commercial interests. The hon. Member for the county of Lincoln last night adverted to the part the agriculturists and their labourers took in maintaining the honour and the glory of our arms during a time of great difficulty and in the last war, and he asked whether it were intended to throw them, when prosperous, into the same state of abject misery as the workmen in manufactories. Now he might be supposed to know something of the first point, and he assured the hon. Gentleman, without disparaging in the slightest degree agricultural labourers, for he knew well the part they had taken and the part the yeomen had taken, and how they had always exerted themselves—that the manufacturers took their full share of the toils of the British army, and that they were no less effective, as British soldiers, in maintaining the honour and glory of our arms than were the agricultural labourers. As to throwing the agricultural labourers back to the same state of poverty as the manufacturing districts were described to be, he could only say that if the fact were that there did exist this misery among the manufacturers, it should have induced his hon. Friend to have asked the House to go into an inquiry and see whether some means or other could not be devised to rescue them from this poverty. For himself, he was sorry that the inquiry at the bar, asked by the manufacturers, had not been gone into; he thought that they ought to have inquired whether the fact were that manufactures were leaving the country, and whether if this were the fact, it had been caused by the high price of corn; and he would have liked to inquire whether, by any alteration of the existing laws, there was any probability of this being avoided. The House, however, would not go into the inquiry, and they had now only to come to a decision upon such information as they already possessed, and upon the evidence which had been advanced by hon. Members on both sides. He would go into the question on general principles, and he had no hesitation in saying that his opinion had long been, that the system of protection and prohibition was only the taking the money out of the pockets of one set of persons to put it into those of others. He knew that under this law great establishments had grown up in this country; but his firm conviction was, that of all countries on the face of the earth, England was the last which should throw anything of the description of prohibition in the way of trade. It was stated last night that the manufactures of this country amounted to 150,000,000*l.* of which 100,000,000*l.* were consumed by the agriculturist, and that, consequently, the agricultural interests were those of the manufacturer; but if there were but two parties in this country, the manufacturer and the agriculturist, the exchange of their commodities would be matter of barter between them, and no matter of price. There was a large portion of the population, however, who were manufacturing for the foreign markets, and they would not allow them to exchange their manufactures for the produce of those foreign countries. There was another ground upon which he thought that great objection existed to the present law—that of its fixing a maximum on the produce of any man's property. It was at the moment that the price of grain arrived at a certain amount that foreign corn was admitted into the market, and he said that this was a disadvantageous mode of proceeding to the grower. They should let things take their course, but they should not allow measures to continue which did good in good seasons, but which produced infinite mischief in bad seasons, when, therefore, their effects were peculiarly felt. He thought that the law was prejudicial to the agriculturist as well as to the manufacturer, and he thought that by a change being made, the position of both would be improved. All attempts to regulate the prices were extremely objectionable, and while the manufacturer had a right to cry out against any efforts being made to raise the price of corn, the agriculturist was also entitled to complain of any attempt on the part of the manufacturer to raise the price of labour. He would merely say in conclusion, that he had risen only to state the opinion which he entertained honestly and sincerely, and he firmly believed, that the manufacturing and the agricultural interests were so mixed and bound together, that one could not flourish and the other fail, and that he believed most sincerely that the present laws were equally objectionable to the farmer and the agriculturist, as well as to all classes. He could not, therefore, do otherwise than support the motion of the hon. Member for Wolverhampton.

Mr. *E. Tennent* said, that as one of the representatives for that part of the kingdom which would be most materially affected by any alteration in the present system of Corn-laws, he felt himself called upon to make a few observations, which, as the debate had hitherto been carried on entirely in reference to England, he would confine to the peculiar case and condition of Ireland. The obvious and inevitable effect of the abolition of the protection against foreign grain, indeed that which was proposed and anticipated, was to diminish the receipts of the farmer and the landed proprietor. However unsuitable the condition of the agricultural interests of England might be to encounter such a reduction, it was impossible to regard its effects on the agriculture of Ireland otherwire than with anticipations of utter ruin. There could be no question, that under the system of protection and encouragement which had been afforded to it by Great Britain during the last thirty years, the agriculture of Ireland had prodigiously improved, and would still continue to make rapid advances. But, notwithstanding this incipient amelioration, it was notorious that the state of agriculture in Ireland was still the most backward, the most depressed, and the least remunerative in Europe. And whether they regarded the state of agricultural science, the deficiency of capital, or the low rate of wages and of prices, it was impossible to arrive at any other conclusion. Now, what was the state of Irish agriculture as compared with that of Great Britain? The number of cultivated acres in Great Britain, according to tables laid before the Emigration Committee of 1827, amounted to 34,014,000 acres, and, including about 240,000 acres since reclaimed under enclosure acts made a total of 34,254,000 arable and pasture, at present under cultivation. For this there were 1,055,892 agricultural labourers, who raised annually produce to the value of 150,000,000*l.* sterling. In Ireland, on the other hand, the total extent under present cultivation was 14,605,000 acres, tilled by no less a population than 1,131,715 agricultural labourers (exclusive of 95,339 occupiers of land who gave employment to others), and producing an annual return of only 36,000,000*l.* sterling. Thus, while the agricultural families of England formed one-fourth of the population, those of Ireland were in the proportion of two-thirds; and whilst Ireland furnished five agricultural labourers for every two employed upon the same extent of land in England, so backward was the science and practice, even of that art on which they were utterly dependent, that, although occupying a richer and more productive soil, the Irish farmer could barely extract from it one-fourth the produce which it yielded to his British competitor. With a branch of national industry thus reduced, as it was in Ireland, to the lowest possible ebb, compatible with the engagements of the farmer, and the bare existence of the labourer, with a calling attenuated almost to starvation point, what further experiment in the way of reduction was it possible to attempt with safety, much less hope to carry into effect? The desperate nature of that attempt would be the more apparent when, in addition to the fluctuating expenses of the land, those outgoings which it was in the power of the farmer to incur or to curtail as his income disposed him, they took into account the permanent burdens which, whatever be the diminished value of its produce, were still leviable off the surface of the soil—such as the rent-charge, now secured upon the land by the best title in the empire, in lieu of tithes; county cess, year by year increasing; the expenses of maintaining the stipendiary magistracy and constabulary; and that impost which now promised to be the most formidable of all—the rate for the relief of the poor, now leviable, and leviable only, off the occupiers of the land in Ireland. With an interest so critically poised, and already so heavily loaded, he did hope that the Legislature would pause before they ventured upon any immaturely considered experiments. It was morally impossible that Ireland, with her heavily taxed land, and heavily taxed commodities, should hold the market for any length of time against rivals who were not repressed by the same restrictions, and who, if not at less cost, at least an equally low cost of production, could send into Great Britain grain of a quality superior to that which the moist and variable climate and imperfect agricultural skill of Ireland enabled her to produce. The result of the experiment must be, sooner or later, to the disadvantage of Ireland, and in the present reduced state of her agriculture to reduce it lower would be to annihilate it, at least as a branch of national industry and national wealth. He had already said, that the prodigious improvement which had taken place in Irish agriculture during the last thirty years had arisen from the protection and encouragement of England, and when it was considered that no other country afforded her a market for her produce, the effect was assignable to no other cause. The facts were these—even after the completion of the legislative union, and for some years subsequent to it, the Irish trade in corn was continued on the footing of a colonial trade, its importation being discouraged by many impolitic restrictions. These were, however, done away with in 1806, when an act was passed (the 44th George 3rd., c. 109), by which a perfectly free trade in grain was established between the two countries. From that hour forward Ireland had become to England what Sicily was to Rome—her granary and stock-farm. The increase in her agricultural exports in every subsequent year had been immense, tilll Ireland, which half a century ago imported from England corn to the amount of half a million sterling per annum, now exported to Great Britain agricultural produce to the amount of 12,000,000*l.* The export of Irish corn alone to England was in the year 1800, 3,238 quarters, and it gradually rose, until in 1838 it was 3,424,302, showing an increase in one article of commerce between two countries for which the annals of commerce would fail to furnish a parallel. And the most convincing proof of the effect which this increasing supply from Ireland had in releasing us from a dependence for food upon other countries was afforded by the decreasing importation of foreign grain in every year since the opening of the Irish trade. The importations of continental wheat were, on an average of five years, from 1800 to 1805, 686,560 quarters, gradually decreasing, until between 1830 and 1835, when it was only 398,509; and the fact of this diminution from 686,000 quarters to somewhere about half that amount was the more striking when considered in connexion with the fact that the population of Great Britain, which was in 1801 10,942,646, increased within the same period to 16,539,818 in 1831, creating, of course, an annually increasing demand simultaneously with an annually decreasing foreign supply. And on this point, on the probable influence of Irish agriculture under the existing system, ultimately liberating England altogether from a dependence upon the continental powers for her supply of food, he could not appeal to a more unobjectionable authority than Mr. M'Culloch (himself an anti-corn law advocate), to a passage from whose works he would beg to call the attention of the House. Mr. M'Culloch, in his *Dictionary of Commerce*, says:—

> "Previously to 1806, when a perfectly free corn trade was for the first time established between Great Britain and Ireland, the yearly imports into England did not amount to 400,000 quarters; whereas they now (1832) amount to 2,400,000. Any one who has ever been in Ireland, or is aware of the wretched state of agriculture there, and of the amazing fertility of the soil, must be satisfied, that a very slight improvement would occasion an extraordinary increase in the imports from that country! and it is believed by those best qualified to form an opinion on such a subject, that the settlement of the Catholic question, and the disfranchisement of the 40*s.* freeholders, by promoting the public tranquillity, and taking away one of the principal inducements to the pernicious practice of splitting farms, has, in this respect, already had great influence, and that it will eventually lead to the most material improvements. Hence it is by no means improbable, that the growing imports from Ireland may at no distant period reduce our prices to the level of those of the continent, and even render us an occasionally exporting country."

But it was not in the article of grain alone that the agricultural interests of Ireland had benefitted by the Union with Great Britain, and by the equality on which it placed her in the English markets. Every other species of agricultural produce had received an equal impetus and manifested a similar increase. He would go no further back than to compare the Irish exports of some articles of agricultural produce to Great Britain in the year 1825 with the exports of the same articles in 1835. Ireland exported to England—

	In 1825	In 1835
Black cattle	63,524 head	98,150 head.
Sheep	72,191 —	125,452 —
Pigs	65,919 —	376,191 —
Butter	471,161 cwt.	827,009 cwt.
Flax and tow	54,898 —	163,947 —

And the amount of her entire agricultural exports to Great Britain in 1835 above that of 1825 was no less than 2,850,450*l.*—an advance of nearly 3,000,000*l.* sterling within 10 years. Nor was this all. The advantages Ireland had derived were not confined to the raw produce of her soil alone; but the impetus of prosperity had been communicated to all those branches of manufacture which were immediately connected with or dependent upon land, and of which fifty years ago Ireland might be said to be altogether destitute. He referred to the immense trade which had recently sprung up in grinding flour and oatmeal in malting and brewing for export, in distilling, in the manufacture of starch, and in short in every department dependent upon agricultural produce. To take one of these branches, so late as 1792 there was but one considerable flour mill throughout the whole of the north of Ireland, and down to a very recent period the mills of Bristol and Liverpool, enjoyed a monopoly of the trade of converting Irish wheat into flour.

The aspect of affairs was now widely different; that process was performed at home, and there was scarcely a county in Ireland which was not supplied with extensive mills. The number of registered flour mills in Ireland in 1835 was 1,882, and they were still rapidly increasing, at a pace, of which some idea might be formed from the fact, that whilst the exports from Ireland of wheat-meal, flour, and oatmeal, was in 1825, 599,124 cwt., it was, in 1835, 1,984,480 cwt., being an increase of 1,390,000 cwt., within the short space of ten years. Closely connected with this, was the process of malting for distillation and brewing, and the exports in the latter department, which was comparatively of very recent date, form not the least surprising item in the history of Irish trading prosperity. In 1825 the export to England of malt liquor from Ireland was almost unknown: it had grown up entirely within the last few years; but in 1835, the quantity of ale and porter entered in Great Britain was no less than 2,686,688 gallons. Distillation had advanced during the same period with amazing rapidity, as well as every manufacturing process for converting the raw produce of Ireland into articles of commerce; nor was it possible to contemplate without alarm and dismay, the probability of a change of policy on the part of England, which would have the effect of throwing them back, without feeling that the confusion, the ruin, and destitution which must ensue to Ireland, would be infinitely more formidable than the original condition of poverty and inaction, from which British connexion and British encouragement had been the first to awaken her. He was prepared to be here met by the same argument by which the protective system had been assailed in England, namely, that even admitting the prosperity of those manufactures in Ireland which shared in the favour and protection shown to agriculture, still this afforded no inferenee as regarded those other branches which were not dependent upon agriculture, but which were represented (in England at least) as oppressed and endangered by the protection afforded to it. So far, however, from this being the case, these very manufacturers were in Ireland participating largely in the general prosperity, and advancing *pari passu* with their common parent and patron of all, the agriculture of the country. Indeed when they regarded the enormous proportion of Irish manufactures consumed by her home market alone, there was no difficulty in perceiving that the prosperity of that branch of her national support must rise and fall with her agricultural elevation or depression. Without producing any statistical evidence on this point, he would merely say, in answer to this argument, that the silk trade of Ireland had not been so flourishing for years as it was at this moment; and that her woollen trade though diminished in apparent amount, was stated by Mr. Willans, of Dublin, one of the most enlightened capitalists in the kingdom, to be at this moment in a sounder and more healthy condition, both as regarded the process and the market, than it had been in any year since the removal of the duty upon English woollens imported into Ireland, which took place in 1823. Besides, any apparent diminution of production in this department was more than compensated by the surprising increase in importation during the same period. Thus they imported from England, in 1825, 3,384,918 yards of woollen cloths, and in 1835, 7,884,000. In the like manner the manufacture of cottons, which in Ireland was almost confined to Belfast, had not latterly been increasing. But the change was most satisfactorily accounted for in two ways; in the first instance, by the extraordinary increase in our imports from England. These were in 1825 4,996,885 yards; and in 1835, 14,172,000 yards; and as this increase was altogether for the consumption of the home market, no circumstance could more strongly point out to the English manufacturer the paramount importance of the agricultural market of his own country. But the other fact which most satisfactorily accounted for the apparent withdrawal of capital from the cotton trade was, that it had all been transferred to the new and most profitable manufacture of linen yarns for the British and foreign markets, a trade which had sprung up entirely within the last few years, and which now promised to become at no distant period one of our most lucrative branches of continental commerce. In addition to nine cotton mills of about 350 horse power, they had in Belfast at this moment, or in its immediate vicinity, no less than 28 mills for the manufacture of linen yarn, working about 120,000 spindles, every one of which had been erected or converted from a cotton to a linen mill within the last seven or eight years; and this trade, so utterly new in Ireland, had within the last three years, opened for itself a market in France and on the Rhine, which, unless crushed by prohibitory duties, seemed likely to become one of the most prolific branches of British trade. But he was prepared also to encounter another and a different species of argument, which had already been repeatedly urged—namely, that agricultural encouragement accorded to Ireland was a positive pecuniary loss to Great Britain; that whilst her labour market was overstocked by Irish immigration, her produce was reduced in value by Irish competition, and that it would in every way be more desirable, that the Irish labourer should stay to consume his own produce in his own country, and thus be securing a remunerating price to the farmer of England. Nothing could be more erroneous. But before proceeding to an easy proof, that the advantage was on the side of England, he would beg attention to one very brief extract which he would read from the third report of the Commissioners for Poor-law Inquiry in Ireland:—

> "Those who complain," say the commissioners, "of the introduction of Irish produce into England, should be informed that it takes no money from England, that part of it goes to pay the rents of Irish absentee landlords, and that the rest is exchanged for English manufactures; that if it did not go into England, English manufactures would not go into Ireland; and that there would not be one penny more than at present applicable to the purchase of the agricultural produce of Great Britain. In proportion as the quantity of Irish produce sent into England was reduced, the quantity of English manufactures sent into Ireland must be reduced also, and the English manufacturer's means of purchasing any agricultural produce must contract accordingly. The price, therefore, would not rise, but the quantity consumed would diminish, and the effect would be to throw the English labourer who works for the Irish market, and the Irish who work for the English, both out of employment, to the destruction of them, the injury of their employers, and the general deterioration of the interest of both countries. All that may be shown, not msrely by general reasoning, but by an appeal to facts. As the import of Irish produce into England has increased, so has the import of English manufactures into Ireland."

Now he (Mr. E. Tennent) had appealed to facts, and their evidence most satisfactorily attested the accuracy of the proposition; and it would be found, that in every instance, precisely as Irish exports to Great Britain had increased in amount, precisely in the same proportion had British manufactures found a market, and a ready consumption created for them in Ireland. He would earnestly beg the attention of English Members especially connected with manufacturing districts to the following facts:—

	Irish Exports to England.	English. Exports to Ireland.
In 1801	£3,270,350	£3,537,725
1805	4,067,917	4,288,167
1809	5,316,557	4,588,305
1813	6,746,353	5,410,326
1817	4,722,766	5,696,613
1821	5,338,838	7,117,452
1825	7,048,936	8,531,355

In 1835, Ireland exported to Great Britain agricultural produce to the value of no less a sum than 12,080,558*l.*, and took back in return English manufactures to the amount of 10,918,459*l.* 4*s.* 4*d.* Some items in this latter account served also to mark the increasing internal prosperity of Ireland. For instance, she imported,

	In 1825.	In 1835.
Tea	3,889,658 lb.	4,794,316 lb.
Coffee	335,921 lb.	1,105,762 lb.
Coals	734,453 tons.	1,001,378 tons.

Now, when they heard this question argued as it had always been both within that House, and beyond it, almost exclusively on the ground of a diminished demand for British manufactures, surely those who subscribed to that argument in the abstract would calculate closely the result before they hurried on to impoverish a market which annually took from them produce to the amount of 10,000,000*l.* sterling. Looking at the interests of Ireland apart from those of Great Britain (if indeed it were possible to look at the interest of one integral portion of the kingdom, apart from the remainder), the effects which the encouragement of agriculture had during the last thirty years upon every department of the internal economy of Ireland would be manifest. The demand for her produce had naturally given a spur at once to the improvement of her inland navigation and other modes of communication, and to her channel shipping. So lately as 1816, Ireland had not a single steam vessel. In 1817 she had one vessel of 63 tons; in 1825, three of 192 tons; in 1830, 31 of 5,490; in 1836, 71 of 18,460. And this irrespective of the enormous tonnage in steam belonging to England and Scotland, chiefly occupied in the Irish channel trade. To capital thus vested, and to enterprise of this kind the abolition of the Corn-laws would be absolute destruction. The canals, which for so great a length of time were regarded as exploded speculations, seemed to have received from the increase of her agricultural production, a revival and encouragement. On the Grand Canal which communicates between Dublin and the Shannon, there were carried—

	Flour. Tons.	Grain. Tons.	Meal. Tons.	Malt. Tons.	Cattle.
In 1822	9,805	14,347	2,075	2,967	10
In 1836	28,378	22,255	4,533	4,862	1,942

Not only would the repeal of the Corn-laws have the instant effect of checking all further improvement in those means for the advancement of Ireland which were already in existence, not only would it repress all attempts at investment or enterprise in steam-shipping in the chanel, in canals, and still-water navigation, in opening up rivers, and in extending railroads, but it would effectually prevent all further progress in the reclaiming of the bogs and uncultivated lands which abound in the provinces of Connaught and Munster. By the calculation of Mr. Griffiths for the Poor-law Commissioners, it appeared that there are in Ireland 14,603,000 acres at present under cultivation, and 5,340,000 more, which were more or less susceptible of it, and which year by year, as the demand for agricultural produce increased, were gradually yielding to the plough. The abolitionists declared it was one of their principles, that the effect of the Corn-laws in England had been to bring into cultivation for corn, cold and secondary soils, which would have been better left for pasture, but which as a mere remunerative crop had been ploughed for tillage. They traced, as one of the causes of the increased price of grain, the increased cost of raising it off those ungenial soils, and they proposed that the effect of the repeal should be to return these again to pasture as before. Without debating this point, he asked in such an event what was to become of the demand for the live stock and provisions now loading in every steamer which crossed the Irish Channel for Scotland, Liverpool, or Bristol? Of course the demand for these would cease along with the market for her corn, when England was driven to supply herself from her own pastures, and to import her corn from the Baltic and the continent of Europe. In fact, it was impossible to conceive the department of the national resources of Ireland which would not be paralyzed and impeded by the measure. Even the adjustment of Irish tithes must be immediately re-opened on the passing of such a bill. Could the occupier of the land, with diminished prices and a closing market, afford to perform his contract with the clergy under the existing law? The thing would be impossible; especially when we conceived (if we could conceive it) the immense masses of agricultural labourers who would be driven from the soil to seek employment amongst the manufacturing population, and who after swamping and destroying them, would fall back upon the last resource—the poor-rates of the district, which were to be levied compulsorily off the already overburdened and impoverished farmer. What was to be the effect upon property itself in the towns of Ireland, whose wharfs, and stores, and offices, and dwellings, now derived their value and demand from the traffic between the coast and the interior? Would a reduction in the price of foreign grain and a readier supply from a distant market recompense England for the ruin of an integral portion of her own dominions? Or were we quite sure that, having destroyed our supply at home, we should always find a continental substitute in quantity as plentiful, on terms as moderate? Were we quite certain that our continental neighbours, emulous, as they were, of becoming manufacturers like ourselves, might not one day attain their object, and of course, diminishing their agricultural, as they multiplied their manufacturing power, raise the price of that grain which was to be for the common supply of themselves and us, to a pitch that we might no longer be able to afford to purchase it, and on what resource were we to fall back when our own granary was destroyed at home? Again, would the people of the continent, in return for our free admission of their grain, consent to admit the entry of British produce without a prohibitory duty? Would they agree to a free trade in everything else as well as in corn—or rather would they not, as the United States had already done, permit us to take their raw produce, but when we returned it to them in the shape of British manufacture, receive it only with such a duty as would be an exclusion in any country in which labour was moderately cheap? He had to apologize to the House for the length at which he had entered into these details, but feeling as he did, that the question, whatever might be its importance in England, was one of life or death in Ireland, he could not reconcile it with his duty to give a silent vote. We should remember that in this matter we were not dealing with a colony or conquered province, but with an intimate and important portion of the British empire, and whilst corn was as much a staple in Ireland as Timber was to Canada, or sugar to the West Indies, he could not reconcile it either to policy, or to justice that Ireland should be postponed to either of these by withholding from her the same protection which was accorded to them, and to which she has, if not a paramount, at least an equal claim.

Sir *Henry Parnell* said, the hon. Member for Belfast had certainly made a very able and satisfactory statement concerning the great progress of improvement in Ireland; but he was at a loss to discover how it was applicable to the present question, for that improvement was not owing to the Corn-laws, but to various other circumstances. With respect to the repeal of these laws, the Irish landlords had less reason to entertain any apprehensions than the landlords of England; because, as Ireland was opposite the port of Liverpool, from which the great manufacturing districts derived their supply of corn, the charge of freight from Ireland would be less than from the Baltic to Liverpool by at least 5*s.* a quarter; for, while the freight for foreign corn to London would be 10*s.* a quarter, the freight to Liverpool would be 15*s.* Besides, the Irish landlords should take it into their consideration that higher rents could be paid than the present rents, even with lower prices of corn, if the methods of managing land were improved by introducing green crops and other advantages. But, to come to the question immediately before the House, the hon. Baronet said, he must begin by observing, that it appeared to him that all those Gentlemen who had addressed the House in support of the Corn-laws, had wholly omitted to make anything like a careful inquiry into the two main points on which the question rested,—namely, the home price of corn and the foreign price of corn. It was on the difference between these prices that the general conclusion depended how far the landlords would be injured by the repeal of the Corn-laws, and how far the public would be benefited; but, although this was evidently the case, the most vague notions were generally entertained by the advocates of the Corn-laws as to what this difference amounted to; and consequently the most exaggerated statements were made as to the injury and ruin which would be inflicted on the landed interest if foreign corn were allowed to be freely imported. The most remarkable circumstance connected with the question was the change that had taken place in the price of corn since the present laws were enacted in 1815. From that time there had been a gradual but regular fall of price, until the home price was not a great deal higher than the price at which foreign corn could be imported. For the first six years after 1815, the average price of wheat was 3*l.* 15*s.* per quarter; for the next ten years, 3*l.*; and for the next six years, to 1838, 2*l.* 10*s.* This latter price may be considered as the settled average for the present, and more likely to fall still lower than to advance. Now, as this reduction of price from 3*l.* 15*s.* to 2*l.* 10*s.* had happened while a very great increase of population had taken place, and while, of late years, very little foreign corn had been imported, it is evident that the quantity of corn grown now in this country must have increased prodigiously since 1815,—a circumstance to be accounted for—by the influence of former high prices to increase the amount of capital vested in farming, and to the improved processes of husbandry which have been introduced. Now, on the other hand, if we examine carefully what the price is of foreign corn abroad, and what it can be sold for after having been imported, it will be found that it is not very far below the price of 50*s.* a quarter. When the hon. Member for London said, last night, that the prices of foreign markets, with the charges on importation, would not allow foreign wheat to be sold at less than 45*s.* a quarter, several hon. Members exhibited a disposition to treat this statement, not only as unfounded, but as altogether ridiculous. If, however, those hon. Gentlemen would take the trouble of making inquiries into the prices in foreign markets, and of reading those books, which are allowed to be of established authority on these matters, they will find that the hon. Member for London was quite correct in the statement he made. Those hon. Members have only to look into Mr. M'Culloch's *Commercial Dictionary* to learn that, for a period of forty-nine years to 1819, the average price of wheat at Dantzic was 45*s.* 4*d.*; and that, for the ten years to 1832, the average price was 33*s.* 5*d.*. Now, taking this lower price, and adding 9*d.* a quarter for the charges of loading at Dantzic, and 10*s.* a quarter for freight and other charges for bringing corn from Dantzic to the English market, the price here will be 44*s.* 2*d.* It may be said, that the prices are lower at other parts of the Continent than at Dantzic; and such is in fact the case; but it will always be found that the difference in the quality of the corn will account for the difference in the price of it. As the quality of Dantzic wheat is, on an average, the same as the quality of British wheat, also taken on the average, the general conclusion which may be drawn from a reference to the prices of foreign corn is that which has been come to by the Member for London, that, one year with another, the price of foreign corn in this country would not be less than 45*s.* a quarter, if the trade in corn was quite free. Some Gentlemen have referred to the low price of wheat at Odessa, as if that was a fact which invalidated this conclusion; but, although the price there is as low, as has been stated, at 24*s.* a quarter, there must be added to that price 15*s.* for freight, which makes 39*s*; and from 7*s.* to 10*s.* is to be further added, in consequence of the inferior quality of this grain. In looking to what would be the effect of opening our ports permanently to foreign corn, it will be found, on examining the whole quantity of corn which those countries annually export that are in the habit of exporting corn, that it is impossible, at least for a great number of years, that any such quantity could be imported as would very materially interfere with the home growth of corn. Dantzic on an average exports only about 250,000 quarters of wheat a year,—Archangel about 80,000 quarters,—and Odessa about 400,000 quarters; so that the whole being about 700,000 quarters—if it all came to this country—it could have but a slight effect upon a consumption amounting to fifteen million quarters a year. In consequence of the quantity of corn for exportation abroad being so limited, any new demand for it raises the price very much: a few years ago when the United States imported corn from the Baltic, the price then rose 7*d.* a quarter. In stating, that the injury which the landowners would sustain, under the present circumstances of the home and foreign prices of corn, would be very small, it is but fair to admit, that the injury inflicted by the Corn-laws on the public at large is much reduced from what it formerly was; and it is also proper to allow that, even if the Corn-laws are not repealed, there is a probability that the home price will be still farther reduced. Green crops are not yet introduced, on a regular system, in Ireland: If they shall hereafter be, and other improvements, there can be no doubt that three times as much corn might be produced in that country as it produced now. In regard to England, if the system of farming were assimilated to that of Scotland, the produce might be nearly doubled; and, now that tithes have beem commuted, there is every reason to expect that a great deal more capital will be applied to farming in England. The right hon. Baronet proceeded to say, that this greatly increased production of corn was what he had looked forward to when several years ago he had advocated the principle of giving protection to agriculture. He had, however, done so, not with the view of forcing up prices, but entertaining then, as he did now, the opinion, that a low price of corn was the proper object of legislation. He would read a short extract from a pamphlet which he published in 1814, to show that what he now said was borne out by what he had written at that period. In this pamphlet he stated, that "enough had been said to show, that the object of the bill (for imposing a duty) is not to enhance the price of corn, nor to sustain exorbitant rents; but, on the contrary, the object of it is to prevent, in the first instance, the injury that would follow from allowing free trade all at once, and to give a fair opportunity to the capital of these countries to produce in agriculture the same effects it had already produced in manufactures—that is, a greatly increased production, attended with diminished prices." At this period peace had just taken place, and it was obviously desirable to prevent a sudden influx of foreign corn. As to the practical soundness of the views he then entertained of securing low prices of corn, by the same means that low prices of manufactures are obtained, he was now ready to allow he was mistaken, and that he had not sufficiently considered the various obstacles in the way of the investment of large amounts of capital in carrying on the business of cultivating land. The general result had nevertheless come about, although after an interval of several years, as was proved by the present moderate price of corn in comparison with what it was in 1814. But, although the price had been so much reduced, and the evil of Corn-laws proportionally lessened, there was still so large an extent of evil remaining that they ought to be repealed. For his part, he did not wish to see the price of wheat so high as 45*s*., the price at which it might now be imported; but thought, that 41*s*. a quarter would be quite sufficient to secure the landowners ample rents; for it had formerly had this effect, the average price for 100 years to 1793 having been 40*s*. a quarter. The hon. Members who support the present system wholly overlook the great injuries which the nation at large suffers from it. He would not, after so much discussion, go into any length of detail to point out what these injuries were; but it was necessary they should be brought distinctly under the consideration of the House. The first great injury he would mention was, the immense waste of national capital that annually took place, by cultivating inferior soils instead of exporting manufactures to purchase foreign corn. If, instead of sending cotton goods to Poland to the amount of 1,000*l*., and getting corn in exchange, it required an expenditure of 1,500*l*. to obtain the same quantity of corn of the home producer, here was a clear waste of the capital of the country to the amount of 500*l*. by forcing inferior soils into cultivation. But this kind of folly was constantly going on: Nothing, therefore, could be more ruinous than the forcing of the cultivation of bad land, rather than importing corn. The means of accumulating capital were reduced, and also the means of employing labour on other pursuits, or of purchasing the produce of labour. Another very great injury arose from making the price of corn higher than it naturally would be. To obtain supplies of food at a low price, to facilitate production, and make all commodities cheaper, are the proper objects of commercial legislation; and no laws ought to be supported that in any respect obstruct these objects. Taking the quantity of all kinds of corn consumed in these islands at fifty-two millions, and the advance in price, in consequence of the Corn-laws, so low as 3*s*. a quarter, 7,500,000*l*. more money is taken out of the pockets of the buyers than if no Corn-laws existed. But so much more cannot be paid for corn than is necessary without great national loss. The increased price diminishes the money applicable to produce or purchase other necessaries and conveniences, and the national wealth and comforts are proportionally diminished. A third injury is the commercial jealousy which our refusal to import foreign corn creates among the governments of the world, and which leads to the prohibition of the importation of our manufactures. This is an evil of the most extensive magnitude, but it is one that is so intelligible to every understanding that it is unnecessary to dwell upon it. A fourth great injury arising from the Corn-laws is the fluctuation in price which they produce. Hon. Members have brought forward instances of great fluctuations in the prices of articles that are not subject to any restrictions; and it is no doubt true, that such fluctuations take place, and also that, if corn were free, still there would be considerable fluctuation in the price of it; but the mischief the Corn-laws do is, to render that fluctuation which is unavoidable, many times greater and more frequent than it would be under a different state of things. There can be no doubt that, the larger the surface from which a country draws its supplies of food, the less likely is it to be injuriously affected by the variations of harvests. Hence there are four great evils directly occasioned by the Corn-laws,—waste of national capital by cultivating bad land—waste of national capital by adding to the price of corn—foreign commercial jealousies and increased fluctuations in the price. The question that arises out of this state of circumstances is, in what way do the public derive compensation for these evils? All the advantages they are ever said to produce is the bettering of the condition of the landed interest; but, when these advantages are carefully sifted, they will be found to consist in one beneficial effect alone, namely, the raising of the rents of landowners. It is a complete delusion to suppose and assert, that farmers and labourers are benefited by the higher price of corn which is the result of the Corn-laws. But that point, had been so often fully discussed, and recently discussed by several Members in that House, that he would not repeat the arguments which establish it. The farmers were in fact capitalists, just as manufacturers were; and they depended more on the rate of rent they paid than upon a high price for corn. As to the labourers, the Corn-laws were a direct tax upon them; for if they were repealed, their food would be cheaper, while their wages would not be lowered, as these depended on the demand and supply of labour, except on an average of many years and not on the price of food. In order to assist the case of forcing up rents, the landowners advanced several excuses—for they do not deserve the name of arguments. Amongst these, they are continually saying, that the dividends on the national debt could not be paid if the Corn-laws were repealed; but on examining what portion of the revenue the land provides, it will be found, that this excuse has no foundation. Taking the gross revenue at fifty millions, of these thirty-six millions are yielded by the Customs and Excise, which are not taxes on land, but taxes on profits and capital. Of the stamps and taxes, not more than half of them is paid exclusively by the land. The Post-office duty and miscellaneous taxes make up the remainder, and not more than one fourth of them can be said to be paid by land; so that out of the whole revenue it is not correct to say, that the land pays more than six millions a-year. With respect to the statement so often repeated, that our taxation raises the price of corn, this on examination will be found to be, for the most part, erroneous. Those who make this statement never bear it in mind, that no tax can raise the price of corn, but such a tax as falls directly on the production of it. It must be paid by the cultivator, who is repaid by the consumer in the shape of an advance in price. Of those taxes, which are general taxes, and paid by all, none fall on the production of corn, and, therefore, they mus be excluded from the calculation; and of those taxes which are usually supposed and said to fall on land, the greater part of them fall on rent and not on the production of corn, and, therefore, they do not add to the price of it. The land tax is a tax on rent. Now, that tithes are commuted in England and Ireland, they are a tax on rent. A great portion of the poor and county rates does not fall on land, namely, that portion which is assessed on buildings not belonging to farmers and landlords, on mills and factories, on profits of navigation and on other profits—this portion amounts to nearly one third of the whole; and there is also another portion of these rates which do not fall on the production of corn—namely, that portion which is assessed on rent and not on land. The whole of the highway rates do certainly fall on the production of corn; but this, together with the portion of the poor and county rates, which really falls on the production of corn and raises its price, cannot be taken at more than 5,000,000*l.* a-year, which sum, upon the total value of the corn, that is grown is about five per cent., and would show, that the whole increase of price occasioned by taxation ought not to be taken at more than about 2*s.* on a quarter of wheat. Looking, therefore, said the hon. Baronet, to the proper object of legislation—that is, to what will most promote the prosperity of the nation—and seeing that this depends upon the progress of wealth, and this on the facilities which exist for accumulating capital—and also seeing, at the same time, how great an annual waste of national capital takes place in consequence of the existing Corn-laws—he would most cheerfully give his support to the motion of the hon. Member for Wolverhampton.

Viscount *Maidstone* protested against the pertinacity with which the opponents of the Corn-laws persisted in agitating the country on that subject. He hoped that if any hon. Member had any thing to say against the Corn-laws, he would say it then, in order that the next time that this question was mooted, it might be met with a silent negative. He fancied, that this question had been settled last session: for if a majority of 200 against the repeal of these laws was not a sufficient settlement of it, he was at a loss to conceive what would be considered sufficient. He was glad to find that this question had been discussed in that House in a calm spirit of philosophy; for out of doors it had been treated very differently. There the Corn-laws had been denounced as a bread-tax—as a code intended to starve the poor and pamper the luxuries of the rich—as an insult to God, and as an injury to man. It would not be difficult to prove that the Corn-laws were none of these things. They were nothing more than a protection which a wise Government had given to the production of Corn within its own boundaries, with a view of insuring the independence of its inhabitants—an object which would be cheaply purchased at the expense of millions. The effect of the present system of Corn-laws, was to lower the prices, and to make them steadier. Who were they who asked for a repeal of them? Not the working classes but the manufacturers, and especially the master manufacturers. Commerce was allowed to be in a very flourishing situation.[*"No, no!"*] He contended that commerce must be in at least a favourable situation. The question was a difficult one. The hon. Member for Wolverhampton had put the question for the first time, in a new point of view. Formerly it had been contended that a repeal of the Corn-laws would be a boon to the manufacturers; he had now said that it would be as beneficial to the agricultural as to the other classes. The agriculturists, indeed, would look at his arguments with diffidence, seeing the shops whence his materials came. It was not fair to leave the landlords out of legislation. He wished the hon. Member for Wolverhampton was a landed proprietor: though he had acted rather scurvily towards the landed interest, he wished some one would leave the hon. Member a landed property, and he would find that landlord's rents did fall in times of difficulty and distress. Had he never heard of rents being reduced 45 per cent. since the war? The hon. Seconder had spoken of suicides committed by farmers in times of distress; but if he succeeded in his object, there would be no farmers to commit suicide. The repeal of the Corn-laws would at the same time injure the commercial interest, for a body of men would be sent into the manufacturing market, who would work at the smallest wages, and who would be the gainers? The merchant manufacturers; the operatives would gain nothing. He should wish to ask the Government why they made this important question an open question? What was the use of a Government if they made all these great questions open questions? Neither party—the repealers nor the anti-repealers of the Corn-laws—were satisfied with them. He had expected that this question, as well as other questions, would have been met by the Government in a different manner—that they would hang together, and keep together. If the present Government did not do so, he hoped another would.

Mr. *Ward* said, that he differed from the noble Lord as to the finality of the Legislature on this subject as well as on almost all the other topics that he had touched upon in the course of his speech. He doubted whether the prevalence of the opinions put forward by the noble Lord, would give any satisfaction to the country. On the contrary, he was impressed with the opinion that the speech of the noble Lord, as well as those of other supporters of the Corn-laws, would go far to convince the country that the subject was under trial before a packed jury in that House, and that they were only giving foregone conclusions on this subject, and that there was very little hope that it would meet with a fair consideration at their hands. He did not believe that any person in that House connected with the commerce or manufactures of the country, would agree with the noble Lord as to the state of prosperity which he alleged it to be in. He was ready to confess that his own opinion on the corn question, had undergone a great change, and that change had been the result of deliberate conviction slowly formed. When he first came into Parliament, he voted in 1833, with the right hon. Baronet the Member for Pembroke, (Sir J. Graham) on this subject, under the impression that the landed interest was entitled to protection, as they were liable to peculiar burdens pressing on them. Since that time he had turned his attention to the subject, and had gone with great care into its consideration. He was deeply interested in the welfare of the land, and he had fully considered how it would be affected by a change in the law. He, in the first place, asked himself what it was that caused the broad and obvious distinction that prevailed between the landed interest in this country and the Continent. The result of his examination was the conviction that the high rent in England did not arise from having the monopoly of the home market, but was the result of foreign trade. It was not the mere cultivation of the broad lands of England that led to this result, but it resulted from the population which manufactures created, and which depended on our foriegn and colonial trade. Thus the landed proprietors of this country received a greater rental than those of any country in Europe, and the difference between here and the Continent, where rent was, comparatively speaking, unknown, arose entirely from our foreign trade. In many parts of Germany rent was entirely unknown, and the very best land in the north of Germany was not let for more than five shillings an acre. The generality of farms there let at from 1*s.* 8*d.* an acre to 5s. In this country the same state of things formerly obtained, and the rent arose in consequence of the great exportation of the manufactures of this country. Where were our crops consumed? At Manchester, Sheffield, Liverpool, and Birmingham, and other large towns, all of which existed by means of the foreign trade they carried on. Was it not, then, suicidal policy if we should persist in a course which would ultimately destroy our manufactures, and drive them from the continental markets? His right hon. Friend, the President of the Board of Trade, stated the other night, that whenever application was made to Saxony, or Wurtemburg, or Prussia, or any other German state for an alteration of the tariff of duties, they were constantly met with, that, in the first place, England must make an alteration in her Corn-laws. The result of the policy that we had pursued on the subject of the Corn-laws, had been to force manufactures into existence on the continent, and it was almost impossible now to contend against the competition which was excited against our manufactures in the continental market. The fact was, that prices were fixed by cost in all the markets of the world, not by the price of wheat in the English market; whether 40*s.* or 80*s.* a-quarter, it was equally immaterial. The consequence of the Corn-laws, however, was, that it was necessary that we should receive more for our woollens, and cottons, and hardware than the manufacturers of other countries, and the result was, that there was a much heavier pressure upon the capitalist and labourer. It was evident to every commercial man of experience that, with low prices and profits, the labouring man never received high wages; and that to afford any profit, it was often necessary to draw the gain from the sinews of the labouring man. He was called upon to do more work and received less money, and he feared this evil was on the increase; and that now they were called upon to work fourteen or sixteen hours a-day in a factory, instead of eight or ten, as was the case a few years ago. On this point he appealed with confidence to the hon. Member for Oldham. The effect of this was not at first clearly seen, but it was now obvious, as we had forced other nations to become manufacturers, and we had now to deal with the competition which we had ourselves created. No one could doubt for a moment that the whole character of the exports of this country had undergone a great alteration of late years—that an export of raw materials had been substituted for an export of manufactured goods. The hon. Member for Leeds had shown this in reference to the trade of the town he represented, and he (Mr. Ward) could state the same fact of the trade of the industrious and skilful constituency whom he had the honour to represent. The community of Sheffield had not much machinery to assist them in their labour; the 120,000 inhabitants of that town subsisted entirely by their skill and industry exercised in manual labour; and Sheffield yearly, monthly, daily, found these foreign markets of which it had once the monopoly, gradually closing more and more against it. To the United States, which had once consumed five-eighths of the manufactured goods of Sheffield, that town now sent little more than the steel which the Americans worked up for themselves; and the retenion of this branch of trade the people of Sheffield owed to their present monopoly of the Dannemora mines. Though a reduction in prices amounting, in some instances, to seventy per cent., had been made in Sheffield manufactured goods, the manufacturers found it impossible to retain the trade. In every species of goods manufactured by manual labour, they were met and beaten by Belgium and Germany. It was said that prices would be ruinously reduced by a repeal of the Corn-laws, but he was prepared to contend that the Corn-laws were not the cause of high prices, but that it was in spite of these laws that prices were kept up in any case. The object of the Corn-law of 1815 had been to keep the price up to 80*s.*, but that object had not been attained. Indeed, had that price been sustained for any number of years, the effect that would have inevitably followed, would have been to reduce the price to the continental level, for it would have caused us the total loss of all our foreign trade. It was argued that free trade would be found a dangerous experiment; it had been tried in Tuscany and utterly failed, and the report of Dr. Bowring had been cited to confirm this statement; but fact of the matter was the reverse, and Dr. Bowring distinctly stated this, and he repeated the declaration of the Finance Minister of Tuscany, that the free trade system had been found most beneficial there, and had put an end to the mischievous fluctuations of price which had prevailed under the old monopoly system. The Minister's own words were these:—

> "The final and most triumphant result in contrasting our present illimited liberty of commerce with the restrictive policy which preceded it, may be seen in undeniable facts. The population augmented—the produce of corn increased three and a-half millions of staja (equal to 337,600 quarters)—the export trade in agricultural produce increased 116,670*l.*—we have suffered little from rise of prices, which have soon regulated themselves, and have never undergone the enormous fluctuations to which they were formerly subjected."

The noble Member for Shrŏpshire insisted, in common with many other speakers, that this was more a tenant's question than a landlord's, but his clear conviction was, that it was a landlord's question. Great stress was laid upon the phrase, remunerating price; and here arose the question whether the tenants rightly understood their own interests or not. He quite agreed with the hon. Member for Wolverhampton, that the tenantry of England were, as a class, an upright set of men, and very intelligent, in their own sphere, but it must be remembered that this sphere was a very contracted one; they looked to their own business, and to nothing beyond it. It was well known that almost universally they received, with the most entire credulity, all the landlords thought fit to tell them—that they fully believed that the Legislature could keep up prices by Acts of Parliament, and a large proportion of them had entire faith in the *hocus pocus*, as it had been called, of the currency. That Parliament could not keep up prices ought to have become manifest to them long ago by the whole course and effects of the legislation on Corn-laws. When hon. Gentlemen talked of a remunerating price, he was at a loss to understand exactly what was meant. Was it a remunerating price for good or bad husbandry [" *For both!* "] That was a most curious answer. Did hon. Gentlemen mean a remunerating price for England, or a remunerating price for Scotland. These were two very different things, as appeared from the evidence before the agricultural committee of 1836. The English farmers before that committee were almost unanimous in declaring that farms must be thrown up in despair; that no improvements in cultivation could possibly take place; that there must be a constant diminution of agricultural produce with the price of wheat under 64*s.* This was the English farmers' estimate of a remunerating price. When the Scottish farmers came to speak, they, with a worse soil, and a worse climate than the English farmers enjoyed, but with infinitely more intelligence and industry, declared themselves well contented with 40*s.* as a remunerating price. Yet in Scotland there was a great competition for farms; agriculture was steadily improving, drainings of the most expensive kind—more expensive than had been entered upon in England, except under very peculiar circumstances, were every where proceeded with, and all at a remunerating price of 40*s.*, while the lowest remunerating price for the better situated English farmer was 64*s.* Mr. Robert Hope, one of the Scotch witnesses, said he considered the Corn-laws had been the very reverse of beneficial to the Scotch tenants; and Mr. William Bell, another Scottish farmer, said he should prefer a fixed duty to the fluctuating scale, and expressed an opinion that wheat could be raised at 6*s.* a bushel. The House ought by this time to have been convinced that tampering with prices by Acts of Parliament was a most dangerous principle, they ought to have become convinced that any attempt to enforce a continuance of a monopoly in this article would be ineffectual, unless they had the power to destroy the surplus produce of good years. When he mentioned the destruction of surplus produce he was not stating a monstrosity hitherto unheard of, or which had never been recommended to the agricultural interest of England. The plan of enhancing prices by the narrowing the supply of produce had been suggested to the agriculturists as one which ought uniformly to be acted upon. Now, it appeared to him that the scheme of thus making an artificial scarcity of the first necessary of life in a country teeming with a fast increasing population, and with its foreign trade depending on the price at which articles similar to our own manufactures can be brought into the markets abroad, was an idea the most extravagant, the most monstrous, that could enter the mind of man, and one which, if ever acted upon, must irresistibly produce the most awful convulsions. It was a fearful sight to behold this determination on the part of a small portion of the community to turn God's blessings into a curse, rather than give up in the slightest degree what they most fallaciously considered their interests. Then as to the effects which were to be produced by a change in the present system. He, for one, was no believer in the theory that its effect would be to inundate this country with foreign corn. What had the agriculturists to fear? When it was considered that wheat was a very bulky article, that but a very small proportion of it, comparatively on an average not more than 250 quarters, could be brought in one vessel; that the range of the exporting countries was very small, he could not understand what the agricultural interest had to apprehend from a change, which, besides, could not be brought into full operation till after a long series of years. Which were the exporting countries? France, with a population of thirty millions, and a bad system of agriculture, arising greatly out of a too minute subdivision of land, could never be an exporting country to any considerable extent. Spain, and the other southern countries of Europe, from want of internal communications and other circumstances, could not for a very long period, if at all, export any very large quantity of wheat. From Belgium and Holland we had nothing to fear, Sweden and Norway did not grow sufficient for their own consumption. Coming to Russia and the Baltic what were the facts? The largest exports from the Baltic in those excellent years, 1802, 1810, and 1818, with the price at Dantzic at 64*s.* 11*d.*, never exceeded 680,000 quarters. The largest imports in one year, in 1802, were 680,494 quarters; in 1810, 267,277 quarters; and in 1818, 355,769 quarters. The average exports from Dantzic for eleven years was 314,450 quarters, equal to about one week's consumption here. The average annual exports from the same place for a period of 166 years had never exceeded 117,963 quarters per annum. As to Poland the total amount in that period was 19,581,947 quarters. Mr. Jacob, in his report on the corn trade, stated that "ten years of unexampled prosperity were required to enable the agriculturists in Poland to attain the point which it reached between 1801 and 1805, when 549,365 quarters was the amount of wheat annually exported thence;" and the same authority added, that it would require ten years more of the application of the same powerful stimulus to reach to 550,000 quarters, about equal to the consumption of this kingdom for ten days. As to prices, the average at Dantzic, from 1791 to 1825, was 45*s.* 11*d.*; without the years in which there was an English demand, 33*s.* 6*d.* At Berlin, 36*s.* 6*d.* The price at Warsaw, from 1815 to 1824, was 28*s.*; at Cracow, 22*s.* The charges to Dantzic from Warsaw were 20*s.* per quarter; from Cracow, 23*s.*; so that the total cost at Dantzic could not, even under the most favourable circumstances, be less than from 35*s.* to 45*s.*, to which would have to be added the freight and charges to this country. Corn was cheaper, no doubt, at Odessa; but the amount of conveyance thence would be three times greater than in the other case; for, besides the freight, there would be the probable damage of much corn in the transit, not to mention that, even at Odessa, it was impossible to say what the price would be raised to, when the enormous amount of English demand came into the market there, where the supply was comparatively so limited. Besides, they had no stock, no farming implements, no manures, no well devised plan of cultivation, and a very small population. When, therefore, on the other hand, he turned his consideration to the skill, enterprise, industry, and material of this country, he could not imagine how there should be an exaggerated apprehension of the effects of foreign competition in the minds of the British agriculturists. If it were urged that foreign produce might be increased, his reply was, that it would not increase in a greater ratio than the population of this country increased. There were seven millions of mouths more to feed here now than there were in 1815, and if the check prevented by the Corn-laws were removed, it was impossible to say in how much greater a proportion the population would increase in future years. Besides, however great the reduction in the price of wheat, the landlords would proportionably gain in every article of their own consumption. There was not an item connected with the establishment of a landowner of this country upon which he would not be a gainer by a repeal of the Corn-laws. It was manifest that whatever advantages were to be derived from a free trade in corn, could not arise under the present system, since everything now was calculated upon the artificial basis of a high price of wheat. But, looking to the moral and political bearings of the question, how vast and important were these. The hon. Member for Norfolk, in enlarging upon the impolicy of a dependence upon foreign Powers, had given in illustration, a most convincing refutation of his own arguments. The hon. Gentleman had told the House that Napoleon in 1810 was the first to relax in his continental system, and to allow of a large importation of corn into this country, at a time when it was most required, because even he, in the plenitude of his power, found it impossible to withstand the general demand for the blessings of free trade. The dependence of nations on each other was an essential principle, and was the great secret of the continuance of the blessings of peace. The great security for a continuance of peace between this country and a great north-eastern Power, notwithstanding the question of a very critical nature was pending between them, was the interest which the landed proprietors of Russia had in keeping open a great market for their produce; and, so again, the security we had that the boundary disputes between the provinces of Maine and New Brunswick would not be productive of serious results—results which every one must deplore, and which he trusted the Legislatures of both countries would do everything in their power, by prudence and calmness, to avert—our great security as to such results was the immense trade which existed between this country and the United States. Considering the many interests by which the two countries were bound together, no trifling cause could give rise to any interruption of the amicable intercourse which now existed between them. Taking moral considerations still, and following them up, he would ask the House to look at home? He would ask them to look at this country, and the vast proportion of its population, who had no interest whatsoever in land—who had no stake, no means of subsistence but their labour? These classes, comprising so large a proportion of the population, were deserving of more serious consideration than had been given to them hitherto in the course of the debate. He knew he might be met at once by the allegation that those classes did not take the same view of their own interests that he did. Advantage might be taken of the error into which a portion of the community had been led by the efforts of reckless politicians. But he apprehended there was nothing clearer than that to the working classes cheap bread and steadiness of price were vital considerations. If there were great fluctuations in the price of corn, everybody, on both sides of the House, must admit that wages followed very slowly. Whether it was a rise or a fall they did not find their level at once. The noble Lord, the Member for Shropshire (the Earl of Darlington), and the noble Lord, the Member for Lincolnshire (Lord Worsley), had indeed dwelt considerably on the fact, or the alleged fact, that the depressing effect upon the working classes of the great rise in the price of corn had been counteracted by a corresponding rise in the wages of labour. He knew that the noble Lords were on that point high authority, but he had made inquiries on the subject. He could speak from his own knowledge of Herefordshire, and he had that day inquired into three or four other counties. He would appeal to the hon. Member for Essex, who seemed inclined to take part in the debate, to state whether in the agricultural districts which he represented, there had been a rise of wages in any degree corresponding with the rise in the price of corn? He knew that in Herefordshire, and he believed that in Cambridgeshire, Sussex, and Surrey, the rise of wages did not exceed 1*s.* or 1*s.* 6*d.* a week. Where men were earning 10*s.* or 11*s.* in 1838, they were now receiving 11*s.* or 12*s.*, or 12*s.* 6*d.* at the very most. He would ask, then, whether, if corn was the principal article of subsistence, a rise of 10 or 12 per cent. in his wages was any compensation for so large an increase in the price of his food?

The distress which the labourer now felt came at a time when he was brought under the severe operation of what he (Mr. Ward) believed a most beneficial change in the Poor-laws, but which for a time was producing most cruel hardships in many parts of the country. All the evils of the rise in the price of bread were enhanced by the suspension of out-door relief. The new Poor-law made very little allowance for those who had married under the old system, and were endeavouring to bring up large families without the assistance to which they had been accustomed. They were told to rely on their own resources; they were told not to trust to the public purse. They were told, that even for sickness and old age they ought to provide out of the wages of their labour. They were told this, and at the same time there was a tax put upon their bread. The two laws were perfectly incompatible. The Poor-laws threw the labourer on his own resources, and the Corn-law told him, that he must not turn those resources to the most advantageous account. That the Corn-law was a tax no man would deny. It was a very heavy tax, and a tax laid on in the most disadvantageous way. It was a tax, which on the supposition, that corn would fall 10*s*. a quarter by the repeal of the Corn-laws, amounted to three millions and a half on the community at large. Had landed proprietors—had a land-owning Parliament a right to impose such a tax? The rights of labour were natural. The rights of property were acquired and conventional, and only existed on the supposition that they were beneficial to the whole community. It was said that, taking into account the inferior soils which were under cultivation, there was a necessity for giving them protection. They were really no more entitled to protection than any description of bad machinery. The landed interest, in supporting the Corn-laws, claimed a reimbursement in the worst possible way from the whole of the community for the taxes they paid. He thought the burdens which attached to the landed interest might, along with the whole system of taxation, fairly come under consideration. The manufacturers had formally declared, that they needed no protecting duty for any article of British manufacture, if the landowners gave up the protecting duty on corn, they did not claim that protection for themselves which they would take away from others. They wanted that an equality of position should be established, but it was an equality of freedom, and not of monopoly. They wanted an equality of perfect liberty, not an equal and uniform restraint on the industry of the country. When the landowners showed themselves disinclined to meet such demands as these in a fair spirit, he would warn them against the consequences of the course they were going to pursue. He hoped he should not be accused of wishing to encourage agitation on this question, or of making an appeal to the fears of the House, if he ventured to prognosticate consequences which he was convinced must result from a perseverance in the system adopted of late years. He thought it a system of imposition. He thought it impracticable, detrimental to the interests of the country at large, but pressing most cruelly on those who were lowest in the scale. When he was told, that that system was essential to the interests of the landowners, he would beg them for one moment to reflect whether they were not exposing the right of property itself, by unjust usurpation, to the greatest possible danger. Did they reflect sufficiently on the grievance which existed in the manufacturing districts, or the extremity of distress sustained by many of the working classes? He held in his hand a declaration, or statement, of a plain matter of fact. It was the case of a labourer, stated by himself, at what was called a convention of the delegates of the working classes. It was the case of a weaver in the very town to which the noble Lord, the Member for North Lancashire, had so confidently appealed the other night—he meant the town of Preston. If this poor man, and others in similar circumstances, traced, or believed they could trace, their sufferings to the enactments of the Legislature, and if they believed that they arose from the predominance of the landed interest in that Legislature, such feelings were dangerous to the peace and stability of the institutions of this country. The House, perhaps, would indulge him for a few moments while he read the statement, It was not exaggerated. It breathed a spirit of deep and just complaint—a sense of hardship, overpowering and overwhelming to the mind, but nothing unfit for that House —nothing that it ought not to hear. The hon. Gentleman read as follows:—

"The effect of these reductions upon the comforts of the weavers had become such as to render their privations intolerable. A young fellow often fancied that he could appear much more respectable than most married people whom he saw around him; but the appearance of a child or two soon undeceived him, and he is found presently in the same miserable condition as most others who, similarly situated in life, had entered the married state —a condition from which all his exertions were inadequate to relieve him till his children were grown sufficiently large to be able to assist in their maintenance. Having been confined to the paltry pittance which his best exertions affords, the casualties of life were wholly unprovided for, and a change of work, a bad kind of work, or a little sickness, destroyed all his credit; and if without friends, in these emergencies, a state of horrid privation commences. He is found frequently toiling an entire day without food; journeying home with a piece of cloth which he hath just finished—if living in the country, a distance of three, four, or five miles, with a pair of clogs on his feet, and clothing in which he is ashamed to appear, for which piece of cloth only 4*s*. or 5*s*. is due, and the greater part of a coming week to provide food therewith, though hungry to commence with, and debilitated in frame by previous privation. Hunger, long endured, and the opportunity, when work is finished, to fill for a moment the belly, is destructive of all physical energy—and a day will frequently pass over after such an opportunity, when preceded by severe privation, with scarcely any consciousness of how the time hath passed. The neighbours, who know not what it is to feel these privations, will charge the man in such circumstances with idleness; the sources of pity are thus in a great measure dried up, and the sufferings of the unfortunate family thereby increased; though were it not for the kind aid afforded by those whose condition is but one remove from the state here depicted, not a week would pass over without hearing of some one having died from starvation. The following cases of suffering are a part of those which have come under his own observation within the last six months;—James Colbert had his wife brought to bed, at a time when he had not one morsel of food in the house. He applied in this state to a shopkeeper with whom he had before traded, but nothing could be had. He next went to his employer—there also he failed. To his poor neighbours he then applied, and found in them the good Samaritan. There was another case—that case was his own. He had frequently had two or three days to get over without any food whatever provided, or any knowledge of the means by which it could be obtained. A little meal borrowed here, a few potatoes procured there, with occasionally the scraps of the last meal from some kind-hearted neighbour, who had a knowledge of his state, or a few pence in the way of loan, were obtained. But this was not always the case, and when himself and his family were thus unfortunate in their applications to the poor neighbours around, then the suffering was indeed great. On Tuesday his father-in-law, who then lived wtth him, failed to get his work out of the loom, as had been hoped, and they went to rest that night supperless. Breakfast time, on the Wednesday, passed away, and still they had nothing to take. Night at length made its appearance, and all the schemes to realize a little food were abortive, having nothing which they could pledge. Such had been their destitute state for a considerable length of time previous. The agony of his own feelings was at this time indescribable, not so much for his own sake as for that of his more unfortunate partner, who had the whole of the day a strong healthy child lugging at her breast, and which had shown itself much more ravenous than usual, owing to having no other food to direct it therefrom. During the night he frequently entreated her to remove the leech from her (for by that name he recollected having designated his own child). Once, on awaking from a brief slumber, he inquired how she felt herself, and found that she had fainted. He immediately arose, took the meal-bag, turned it wrong side out, and shook it over the table; the few grains detached therefrom he collected, and made of them a bowl of water-gruel, and with this, he really believed, her life had been preserved. How many were present at some ball or masquerade, the expence of admission to which would have victualled his little family a month or more? But how little do such men, although deriving the whole of the abundance they enjoy, care or feel for that condition which their own pride or avarice hath alone created."

If the smallest portion of this suffering could be ascribed to the wealthy aristocracy of England—if they said that such a state of things was essential for their support, in what a position did they place themselves? They placed themselves in the position of the old French nobility. They claimed exemption from their share of the contributions demanded by the State. And where was that nobility now. There was an end of their career and their exactions. He believed that there was great truth in the remarks of an historian, who he believed he might say belonged to the other side of the House, in speaking of the condition of the working classes before the French revolution, which every one knew was distinguished by such fearful excesses. The writer he referred to said—

"What is the constitution to them (the people but bread to eat? Fancy five millions of gaunt figures a starting up to ask their upper classes, after long unreviewed centuries, virtually this question—'How have ye treated us? How have ye taught us, and fed us, and led us, while we toiled for you?' The answer can be read in flames on the nightly summer sky. *This* is the feeding, and leading we have had of you—emptiness of stomach, of pocket, of head and of heart! Did ye mark amongst your *rights* of man, that man was not to die of hunger while there was bread reaped by him? It is amongst the *mights* of man, and so will ye find it Such an arrangement must end; but oh! most fearful is such an ending! Let those to whom God, in his mercy, has granted time and space, prepare another, and a milder one, before it be too late!"

These were the words of Mr. Carlyle. He was deliberately of opinion, that a striking similarity was growing up between the portions of the landed interest in this country and that of the landed interest under the old *regime* in France. He could not look without deep alarm at the consequences of a perseverance in the present system. He did think that the connection between it and the sufferings which the working classes endured could be clearly, palpably, and distinctly traced. His own means of subsistence depended wholly on land, and yet they would talk of his being prejudiced, and of his pandering to popular passions. He would rest his support of the motion on a principle of self preservation and also on a principle justice: and if the House came to the decision to which they ought to come, to which a regard for their own character and for what was due to the interests of the community would lead them, they would be acting on a principle not only of justice, but of common sense.

Sir *James Graham* said, that it was because he did not believe that the proposal was founded on a principle, either just, necessary, or true, that he could not give it his assent. He could not advocate any measure which, in his conscience and judgment, he did not believe conducive to the general interest of the whole community. He was bound to say, that he approached this subject with the greatest reluctance. He was not disposed to treat it on the narrow grounds on which some hon. Gentlemen attempted to put it, as if it were only a landlord's question. On the contrary, when he considered that it was of so large and extensive a nature, branching into such various ramifications, and bearing on so many of the springs of national industry, he became painfully conscious of his own inability to grapple with it in the manner that he thought it deserved, and he almost shrunk from the task of discussing it. Yet he could not remain silent on the present occasion. He had been repeatedly referred to in the course of the debate, and although he feared he could say nothing worthy of the attention of the House, he would make amends by compressing what he had to state into the narrowest limits. In the first place, he could not but remark, that, in his judgment, there was no operation which the Legislature could perform more critical, or more dangerous at all times, than any attempt to alter the established laws which regulate the supply of daily food for the people, inasmuch as it was a subject on which the minds of the people could be most easily excited, on which the strongest prejudices existed, and the utmost irritation prevailed. There was this additional danger attendant on legislation on this subject, that the disposition to legislate was always strongest at a time of comparative scarcity, when passion was most excited, when inflammation was greatest, and, consequently, when danger was most imminent. If he wanted an illustration of the dangerous spirit likely to be prevalent at such a time, he would refer to the speech of the hon. Gentleman who had just sat down, and especially to the topics with which he had concluded—the sufferings of a hand-loom weaver at Preston. When it was quite notorious that the circumstances of the hand-loom weavers were peculiar, he had compared them to the situation of the population of France before the French revolution, and to the nobility of the same period he had deliberately compared the aristocracy of England. Such was the inflammable nature of the topics used at such a time. It was true that the price of provision was high. It was a misfortune. He admitted it. But was it within the control of the landlords? Was it within the control of the Legislature? That was the question, and to that subject he meant to address his remarks. An hon. Member whom he saw opposite, and whom, notwithstanding political differences, he hoped he might still call his hon. Friend, the hon. Member for Bridport, had used expressions on a former occasion with which the latter part of the speech of the hon. Member for Sheffield exactly tallied; something similar in effect had also fallen from the hon. Member for the Tower Hamlets. The hon. Member (Mr. Clay) had talked of the necessity of pressure from without. The hon. Member for Bridport told them, that there could be no hope from the landlords of England until they were operated upon through their fears. The hon. Member for Sheffield had said the same. Now hon. Gentlemen who contended for a free trade in corn might denounce the landlords for selfishness; they might hold them up to public execration as interested monopolists; they might regard them as blind or as stolid as the oxen they fed; he defied them to dissemble or conceal this striking truth, that they were powerful, and had possession of the soil of England. He contended that they were an honourable body of men—that they were willing to listen to reason—that they would hearken to argument, and if it was proved to them that the exclusive burdens which affect land were considerably reduced, he did think they would be willing to consider a re-adjustment of the duties on corn. But if the advocates of free trade expected them to yield to fear, he mistook their character greatly, if he could not confidently pronounce, that from such motives as these, they ought not—so they never would act. But as to the danger of this species of agitation, he would just remark, that if this conflict were pushed to extremities, there might be some doubt as to what would become of the present owners of the soil, but the land would remain. Commerce—credit floating capital, were exotics, which flourished in the sunshine of national tranquillity; and if a struggle, such as was contemplated on the other side, were pushed to extremities, the very manufactures which they sought to encourage, would make to themselves wings and fly away to lands where they might hope that national peace would be preserved, and life and property be secured. He must be permitted to observe, that if there was danger in the operation of legislation on such a subject, and at such a time, it was on that account the paramount duty of the Government of the country to put some restraint on the pruriency of the disposition to legislate, and, above all, to put some restraint on themselves. What, therefore, was his astonishment the other evening, when he heard the President of the Board of Trade declare that he had encouraged agitation—a declaration well worthy, as it appeared to him, of the Member for Manchester; but utterly unworthy of a Minister of the Crown—a declaration which gave some authenticity to a report which had considerable currency in the north, to the effect, that when the right hon. Gentleman visited his constituency in autumn, his parting injunction to them was to work the Corn-law question—a declaration which, if it had no effect on Gentlemen sitting on the other (the Ministerial) side of the House—if it did not awaken them to some sense of their impending danger—then he would say that their eyes were blind and would not see, their ears were closed and would not ear, until party spirit led them to their own destruction. He would make, upon the subject of the motion, this general observation:—If he did not mistake, the balance between consumption and production was the regulator of the price of any commodity. Those who would seek to destroy that balance, and by force of law provide that for a diminished consumption there should be no compensation in an increased price, laid the axe at the root of production itself. If home grown corn were such a commodity, and if they endeavoured by force of law to establish that, in a year of comparative scarcity, the home-corn grower should not have a price which would cover the cost of production, they aimed a deadly blow at British native agriculture, which, after all, depend upon it, was the foundation of national power and prosperity, and the mainstay of national greatness. He was bound to say that the hon. Gentleman who had brought forward this question, the hon. Member for Wolverhampton, the hon. Member for the city of London, the hon. Member for the Tower Hamlets, and the hon. Member for Sheffield, who had just sat down, had argued the question with perfect fairness. They had frankly avowed their intentions. Their arguments were equally strong against a fixed duty, and against the present scale of fluctuating duties. They had manfully and plainly avowed that their object was a free trade in corn, because without a free trade in corn national prosperity could not be secured. But there was a preliminary question which he wished to ask—he was peculiarly entitled to ask what were the intentions of her Majesty's Government when they gave their votes for going into committee. He had listened to the speech of the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade on a former evening, but could gather nothing from it as to the ultimate views of the Government; they seemed about to go into Committee with no distinct purpose, as if some stray votes might be caught by leaving the matter in uncertainty. To their plans, indeed, he might apply the line of Pope, with the alteration of a single word. They were indeed,

> "A mighty maze, but *all* without a plan."

He could not divine what was their object, whether it were for a fixed duty of a greater or less amount; and he was infinitely more bewildered when he remembered the declared opinion of the head of her Majesty's Government—of Lord Melbourne—upon this question. With regard to that noble Lord's opinion there was no doubt whatever. It stood recorded. He would read to the House the opinion which Lord Melbourne had expressed in Parliament, at the end of last Session, with regard to any change whatever in the existing system of Corn-laws. That noble Lord was reported to have spoken as follows:—"The present system having been in operation now ten years, he felt bound to say, that in his opinion it had acted well for the interests of all parties, much better than was expected, and much better than could have been anticipated by any one." Now, when the President of the Board of Trade referred to the speech of Mr. Canning, who introduced the measure of 1827, when Lord Melbourne was his colleague—at least he was a colleague of the Duke of Wellington in 1828—and was no doubt cognizant of the views of those who introduced the present Corn-law—when, as he said, the right hon. President of the Board of Trade referred to Mr. Canning's speech to show, that the expectations expressed in it were falsified by the event, he (Sir James Graham) would refer to the head of the present Government, who was a party to the introdution of this measure, and who said the expectation of its framers was not falsified, but that their most sanguine hopes had been exceeded. Lord Melbourne further said, that "the present system had operated well, and it was dangerous to touch it. He was afraid that if they touched the system they would lose all the advantages it was calculated to produce, and that, without gaining any other advantage, they would incur evils of the greatest magnitude." He (Sir James Graham) was glad to offer to the noble Lord opposite, representing her Majesty's Government in that House, the opinions delivered at the close of last Session by the head of the Government under which the noble Lord was serving. The noble Lord under whom he served foresaw dangers of the greatest magnitude in touching the question at all. The noble Lord opposite was now about to give his vote for going into Committee, and for disturbing the settlement of that question. He would be glad to learn, and he thought the country ought to learn, from the noble Lord, what change of circumstances between the time when that speech was made and the present moment, induced her Majesty's Ministers to think that there was danger in touching in July, that which it was right and expedient to enter into and unsettle now. Indeed, he apprehended that this was only a part of the practice of her Majesty's Ministers, who were loosening and disturbing everything, and winding up and settling nothing. It had been said, that this was with Lord Grey's Government an open question. He (Sir James Graham) begged leave, so far as he was concerned, to deny any knowledge of such being the case. It had been distinctly denied by his noble Friend the Duke of Richmond, on whose honour he thought implicit reliance might be placed: that noble Duke said, that if the question had been so considered, he would not have remained one hour a member of that Government. He was well aware that there were certain members of Lord Grey's Government who were not members of the Cabinet—who, having come in under certain pledges to their constituents, were permitted by Lord Grey, without tendering their resignation, to fulfil their pledges. But to the best of his knowledge and belief, Lord Grey would not have allowed a member of the Cabinet, in 1834, when he had the honour to defend the existing system of Corn-laws against the motion of the hon. Member for Kilkenny, to have voted in favour of an alteration in those Corn-laws. Had he no ground for saying this? Let any hon. Gentleman refer to the speech of Lord Althorp on that occasion, and he would find that he spoke evidently under a duress of the most stringent description imaginable.

The noble Lord said to the advocates of the motion, "You know my previous opinions—that they are in favour of alteration; but I cannot admit them into this question. I cannot answer those against whom I mean to vote, and I cannot speak in favour of those with whom I mean to vote, but with whom I differ in opinion." If any doubt could be entertained of the strong compulsion under which the members of Lord Grey's Cabinet acted, the arguments urged and the assertions made by Lord Althorp on that occasion, would set the matter at rest. Even in that speech of Lord Althorp, his usual good sound common sense made its appearance. He said, "I reconcile this vote to my conscience for this reason: in determining upon a measure, I not only look how it is to commence, but before it commences, I look at the chances of carrying it through." He asked the noble Lord who was now about to vote for going into Committee this night, whether he had first used the precautions recommended by Lord Althorp on that occasion? The noble Lord might go into committee with a view of enacting a measure on this subject; but he believed he would find a great difficulty in carrying it through. He passed now to matters of more importance. He would venture to ask the hon. Gentlemen who had advocated this measure, to state expressly what their intentions were with regard to the price of corn. The question might be involved in an inextricable labyrinth of reasonings, and great knowledge of political economy might be displayed upon it; but, after all, it must come to plain common sense, and frank, open declaration. What were their intentions with regard to the price of corn? Did they mean to raise the price of corn? for even that had been intimated. It was said, that the advocates of the Corn-laws were altogether wrong, and misunderstood their own interests. They were told that if the laws were repealed, there might be a little falling off in the first instance, but they might depend upon it that the price of corn would be ultimately raised. Hon. Gentlemen might remember that sometime after the middle of the last century, about the year 1776, there was a free trade in corn. We ceased to be an exporting country, and we became an importing nation, and the effect was, that the average price was raised at once 14*s.* Yet hon. Gentlemen would not fairly tell the House what was their object. Was it their object to raise the price of corn? If it were, they would ultimately raise the price of wages, and diminish the rate of profits, and thus entirely counteract the intention of the manufacturers. Was it their object not to raise the price of corn? Let them frankly tell the House whether this was their intention. If they desired a low price of corn, let them explicitly declare their intention, and he would tell them at once that they desired to produce a low rate of wages. They sought, in fact, to lower wages, and let the agricultural and the manufacturing labourer thoroughly understand that low wages would certainly be the ultimate effect of the low price of corn, that the price of corn, however, would be uncertain; the repeal of the laws would throw upon the market for manufacturing labour a large addition of hands when the price of corn was low, and when, after a lapse of four or five years, the price of corn should rise, because we shall be dependent upon foreigners, and because large quantities of land had been thrown out of cultivation—in vain would the unhappy labourers seek for a rise in the rate of wages. He would, therefore, argue this as an agricultural question, and he would declare that nothing could be more dangerous to the real interest and the future welfare, comfort, and independence of the labourers. But hon. Members would not be explicit in their statement, they would not declare whether it were intended to raise, or whether it were intended to lower wages. Hon. Gentlemen would not tell them this, but they delighted in what they called equalization. And here he might be allowed to say, that he was extremely glad to see, the other day, the electioneering squib, written from Downing-street, to the independent electors of Stroud; but, for himself, he confessed he agreed rather in the expressions used in the noble Lord's letter from Woburn Abbey, and his thought turned at once to "the wretched horses, the wretched ploughs, and the wretched men;" and when hon. Gentlemen talked of equalizing the prices and equalizing the profits, he thought of equal beggary, of equal wretchedness, and of equal want. The same law held good in politics as in physics; it was easy to pull down that which was above, but it was extremely difficult to raise that which was below; and it was generally found that the levelling system ended in sinking both the high and the low together, somewhat below what the lowest was before. That was the effect of the equalizing process. An argument had been used by hon. Gentlemen opposite, that the repeal of our laws would raise the price of corn on the Continent, that this rise in the price of corn abroad would raise wages, and that this rise in the wages would enable our manufacturers to compete with the manufacturers of foreign countries; but the whole of this argument proceeded on an entire fallacy. The hon. Gentleman, the Member for Sheffield, had rightly told them that the price of bread would ultimately regulate the price of wages here, but that it would do so slowly; he, however, contended that the price of wheaten bread on the Continent would do nothing towards regulating wages, though it might in England inasmuch as wheaten bread was an article of necessity in England; the argument failed if it were applied to other countries in which wheaten bread was not an article of necessity, as it was not in Germany or in the greater part of the Continent, except France, Spain, and Portugal — on the Continent the labourers generally eat rye bread, or bread formed of a mixture of rye; and it was as well to say, that the price of rice or the price of tea regulated the rate of wages at Canton as that the price of wheaten bread on the Continent of Europe, except in France, Spain and Portugal, regulated the price of labour there. Therefore, it was not a necessary consequence of the rise of the price of wheat on the Continent, that the rate of wages should increase. If the effect of the repeal should be to lower wages in England, it would degrade the character of the labourers. Let them look over the whole world, and they would find, that a low price of food led to a low rate of wages, and that a low rate of wages produced great degradation in the character of the labourer. Let them look at the Hindoo, the price of food to him was low, the rate of wages did not exceed three rupees, and there was not a more wretched, a poorer, or a more degraded nation, than the Hindoo. Again, what was the condition of Sicily? It possessed some of the most fertile land in the world; its climate was most genial; and, having passed some time there, he could speak from his own experience, that though bread was cheap, wages were extremely low, and there was not, in Europe, so poor, so wretched, and so degraded a people, as the inhabitants of Sicily. They were told, that if they did not relax the Corn-laws, we should lose the advantages of reciprocity with other nations, who were now in league against us, and it was said, that their repeal would lead to an extended continental intercourse. Some vague hope of this kind had been held out by the right hon. Gentleman, the President of the Board of Trade; but he (Sir James Graham) must say, that the evidence adduced by that right hon. Gentleman was most meagre. He thought, that he should have produced some documents to show, that representations had been made by foreign Powers, and that proposals had been submitted to the Government; but what evidence had he produced? Why, he had read only three letters from a gentleman named Gregor; only one of these letters bore upon this question, and that only slightly touched the case of Prussia; but the two others related to that most important corn-growing country, Wirtemberg, with which we maintained the most extended commercial relations. He remembered, that in a former year, in the debate of 1834, when, being the colleague of the right hon. Gentleman, he experienced all the advantage of this being an open question, for if hon. Members looked to that debate they would see, that he received from that right hon. Gentleman, a most severe castigation, which he seemed so rejoiced to inflict, that his right hon. Friend, now no more, (Mr. Ferguson) declared, that his right hon. Friend delighted in finding one open question, to enable him to pour out the vials of his wrath against his colleagues, and when the result was such, as must always happen when there were open questions, for when Members of the same Government differed on subjects of primary importance, they could not argue them with that composure, and that perfect self-possession, which was necessary to maintain an united and a cordial administration — he remembered, he said, that upon that occasion his right hon. Friend had told them, that the French people were knocking at the doors of the Legislature of that country with a force, that could not be resisted and that the French government must acquiesce in the establishment of a free commercial intercourse. The House was enraptured at the prospect; a commercial treaty of vast importance was immediately expected, and what had resulted from it? Why, a noble Friend of his, who then had a seat in that House — a man of first-rate sagacity and of great experience in commercial transactions—he meant Lord Ashburton, then Mr. Baring — had foretold precisely what would happen. Mr. Baring, who had a perfect knowledge of France, had in that debate told them, "they will receive you with great attention. Your great philosopher, Dr. Bowring, will be puffed from one end of the Continent to the other in their newspapers, as the greatest genius that ever came amongst them; but you will get nothing else from them." That great philosopher, would be received with extacies by the people of Nantes who would agree to sell him their brandy; the people of Bordeaux would gladly supply him with their wines; and the manufacturers of Lyons would be most ready to induce him to put down the silk trade in England; but let him try the cotton manufacturers of Rouen, let him go to the hardware manufacturers in the south of France, and the great philosopher would find an insuperable objection to such doctrines, he would be received with sugared words, and with the best assurances of a desire to promote mutual interests; but these manufacturers would never consent to a relaxation of their tariff. But his noble Friend, said, moreover, "even if the right hon. Member for Manchester, and the hon. Member for Middlesex (Mr. Hume), were to join their exertions, and thus complete the trio, to those of the illustrious doctor, they would fail to persuade either France, or Prussia, or the small states of Germany to make any concessions on those important points." If great talent and equal zeal for the public service would have succeeded, the exertions of the Earl of Clarendon would have succeeded, but they had failed. Since that, the nephew of Lord Ashburton, the late Vice-President of the Board of Trade, had been on the same mission, and perhaps he would inform the House whether he had succeeded any better than the eminent philosopher, Dr. Bowring. Then, with respect to the dependence on foreign supply, hon. Gentlemen were very little inclined to enter into a reasonable argument; but, where it was difficult to answer a statement, nothing was so easy as to turn it into derision and contempt. The idea of any danger arising from our being dependent on a foreign supply of corn, was scouted as a complete fallacy—as an idea that no rational man now entertained, He, however, had yet to learn that this was an imaginary evil. He had, indeed, heard something of an argument on this point. It was said, that if a country which imported corn, suffered a loss from the stoppage of the supply to which it had been accustomed, the community which expected the corn would experience even more from the suspension of the trade, and that this continued channel of trade, and that this balance of interests was a security against any chance of danger. He could not refer to this branch of the question without expressing his great deference to the opinions of Mr. Huskisson. He knew that a single passage in a speech made by that right. hon. Gentleman in the year 1830, against the Corn-Laws, had been quoted by hon. Gentlemen opposite, but they could not set this casual expression in a single speech, uttered in the heat of debate, against the whole policy of the right. hon. Gentleman's long and most useful life. That right hon. Gentleman was a party to the agricultural committee of 1821, and he (Sir James Graham) knew of his own knowledge, and in this he could be confirmed by Mr. Jacob, that the present plan of a diminishing scale was of Mr. Huskisson's invention, that Lord Liverpool had adopted it, that it had received the assent of Mr. Canning in 1827, and that Mr. Huskisson assisted in its completion in the year 1828. The argument of our mutual independence was so ably handled by Mr. Huskisson, that he entreated the House to listen with attention to what Mr. Huskisson had said, when Mr. Huskisson, in 1820, urged the same argument as the hon. Gentleman opposite. The argument was quite conclusive, and it was expressed much better than in any language of his own. On the 30th of May, 1820, Mr. Huskisson said, "Another object, which appeared to him of more importance than it did to the hon. Member for Portarlington, was, that this country, in its peculiar circumstances, should not be dependent, to too great an extent, on foreign countries for the necessaries of life."* And Mr. Huskisson then came to the argument urged by the Gentlemen on the opposite side of the House.

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* Hansard, vol. i. New Series, p. 478.

"The hon. Member for Portarlington had stated, that there would be suffering on both sides, if the country which raised corn for us attempted to withhold that supply. But the contest would not be an equal one. To the foreign nation the result would be a diminution of revenue, or a pressure on agriculture; to us the result might probably be revolution and the subversion of the State." This was said in 1820; but had any change taken place in Mr. Huskisson's views in 1827? In that year Mr. Huskisson laid down a general principle, when Mr. Canning brought in the bill which had now become the law of the land, and which gave protection to the home produce. The right hon. Gentleman at that time said, "I think nothing so dangerous to this country as to rely too largely and too frequently on foreign countries for supplies of corn. I wish to make this country independent of the foreigner, commercially as well as politically. You may rest assured, that as long as it is the interest of the foreigner to produce distress, or cause us political discomfiture, they will endeavour unceasingly to do so." Mr. Huskisson never receded from his declared opinion that—"Whatever arrangement was made respecting the Corn-laws, we must take care not to put ourselves in the power of foreigners."* The authority of Mr. Huskisson showed, then, that the argument of the hon. Gentleman opposite was the grossest fallacy that was ever entertained by a rational people. He was, however, yet more surprised by another argument of the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade, which contained a fallacy that was still more astounding; that the law of 1828 was identical with the law of 1815. If ever there were two things that were more opposite, if ever light differed from darkness, there were no two things more directly opposite to one another than were these two laws. What was the law of 1815? It was a law of absolute prohibition, till the price of wheat rose to 80*s*., and when it arrived at 80*s*., then there was to be an unrestricted importation, and the averages were to be taken only once in three months, so that when the ports were once opened, there was an unrestricted importation for three months. What, however, was the law of 1828? Importation was at all times permitted upon paying a varying rate of duty; there was no prohibition, and the averages, instead of being taken every three months, were taken every week. Was it possible to conceive, therefore, two laws that were more opposed to one another. There was no greater difference between the system of what was erroneously called free trade, which had been attributed to Mr. Huskisson, and the old system of total prohibition at one time, and unrestricted importation at another, and the present system, when the ports were at all times opened. It appeared to him, that, for a state of the power and the magnitude of Great Britain, deliberately and voluntarily to place itself in a state of dependence on foreign Powers for its daily food, was the most foolish thing that could be imagined. It was like placing the country in a state of siege—all the supplies were to be drawn from without, and if they were stopped, there would be a state of dearth which would lead to absolute desperation, and there would be this destruction if our supplies could be cut off by any foreign Power. If we placed ourselves in that position, there were enemies so jealous of us, that they would readily cut off the supplies, and reduce us to the greatest extremity; and when he heard such a proposition pressed, he could but consider it most dangerous and most unwise. After all it was not in the power of any human legislation to prevent occasionally a deficient harvest. Neither was it possible for any legislation to prevent a deficient harvest from being a national calamity. Since the year 1801 he believed that we had not been visted by a harvest so deficient as we have experienced in the present year. The present law had in the course of ten years, therefore, been exposed to trials of the most opposite character. The year 1834 was one of a most abundant harvest, and prices fell, but not to a very great extent; and this year this law which had been so much abused had had to contend with a crop more deficient than had occurred in England since 1801. He held in his hand an account of the state of the corn-market in Mark-lane on Saturday last, written by a gentleman on whom the greatest reliance could be placed, and what did he say?

> "A very considerable fall—as much as four or five shillings per quarter—has taken place at Mark-lane in the prices of wheat, which is attributed to the large importations of

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* See Hansard, New Series, vol. xvii. p. 1335.

foreign corn. We believe that there are other causes leading to the same result, which we shall presently notice. In the meantime the following may be taken as a tolerably accurate sketch of the present state of things. There has been less corn threshed out than is usual —less even in proportion to the deficient quantity produced at the last harvest. The smaller farmers have been compelled to sell, but the more opulent class have held back firmly, under an erroneous calculation that prices would be enormously high. In these circumstances the millers in the interior have found it difficult to keep their mills in work. There have been unusual supplies of foreign wheat sent into all parts of the country within seventy miles of the sea ports. These efforts have produced a temporary glut in the stock of flour in many parts of the country. The alarm concerning scarcity which prevailed throughout the month of December and during the first week in January, caused all manufacturers of corn to make great exertions to lay in stock. The Irish millers especially, with their prodigiously increased mechanical power employed in this trade, have been able to send forth supplies that have glutted all markets on the western side of this island. Flour is become a drug, and sales cannot be forced till stocks are reduced and prices fall, for all retailers, influenced by the same motive, have made similar exertions to keep up their supplies. They are consequently full of stock, especially in the densely peopled districts of the north, their funds are exhausted, and they have no power to purchase largely. In these circumstances all speculation for a rise must for some weeks cease. We believe the importations since the first of September, including what was then taken out of bond, now amount very nearly to 2,500,000 quarters of wheat,"

So that this law which had been lately so much traduced, had, in a year of great scarcity, and in seven months allowed an importation of no less than 2,500,000 quarters, although he (Sir James Graham) did not believe that under any other law in the course of a whole twelve months there had been more than two millions of quarters imported. Not only had this been the case, but further supplies were coming from abroad, the prices had fallen twenty per cent, and thus the defect in the existing harvest had been met under the present laws by the largest importation of foreign corn that had ever taken place within a like period. Other Gentlemen had treated of the effects of a law upon the manufacturing interests much better than he could do; but he must observe that the declared value of our exports had increased; thus the assertion of the hon. Member for Wolverhampton was negatived by the facts. The declared value of our exports, in articles of manufacture was not only as large this year as in any former year, but it was actually larger, and moreover this took place under the present law, with extreme scarcity existing and a very deficient crop. It was extraordinary also that the exports of manufactures into which the largest portion of manual labour entered were increased this year, and this after it had been proved that in no former portion of our history had there been so large a quantity of foreign corn imported in so short a time. The right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade had referred with great satisfaction to the dependence of this country for a supply of raw cotton on a foreign country, and he had contended that a supply of food might be relied upon with equal safety. Seeing, however, the large amount of our population dependent upon the state of our cotton manufacture, and looking at the position of affairs in the only quarter of the globe where any large quantity of the raw material was grown, he feared that we could not always depend with equal certainty on the supply. He had always hoped that instead of attempting to extend the limits of our territory in the east, and to stretch the bounds of our Government there; and instead of being diverted by war, we should cultivate there the arts of peace, and that we should devote our attention to the better raising of the cotton plant, to its better growth, and to its better packing; and he could conceive nothing more worthy of the attention of the right hon. Baronet, the President of the Board of Control, than emancipating this country from the necessity of relying on the United States for our supply of cotton. It was in his opinion an evil to be dependent on any country for a supply of cotton, but, if we were, with the dense mass of our population, dependent for our bread also on a foreign country, we should be running greater risk than the Legislature seemed to contemplate, and in his conscience he believed that such a change would be fatal to our manufactures and to the independence and the prosperity of the country. Something had been said about the taxes which fell upon agriculture. A return had been made up to 1833, of the proportion of local charges paid by the agriculturists, and his hon. Friend the Member for Cornwall had moved a continuation of the return. Up to 1833, however, they knew accurately how much the agriculturists paid. The return was made up to the 25th of March, 1833; at that time, the poor and the county-rates amounted to 8,600,000*l.*, of this sum the landed interest paid 5,439,000*l.*, or five-eighths of the whole burden; and of the remaining three-eighths imposed upon dwelling-houses by far the greater portion was discharged by the landlords, or by the shopkeepers and other persons dependent upon or connected with the landowners and farmers in rural districts. The highway rates amounted to 1,485,000*l.*, and of this sum the persons connected with land paid in money or in labour 939,000*l.*, or two-thirds of the whole sum. The county rate in 1793 amounted to 184,000*l.*, and, in 1833, it had increased to 757,000*l.* To take a specific instance of the rapid increase of these local burthens, he might refer to the county of Stafford. In the year 1792, the sum required for the repair of bridges in the county of Stafford was 298*l.*, in 1832, the amount required for the bridges only was 6,667*l.* In 1792, the cost of gaols and the maintenance of prisoners was 2,600*l.*, but it had risen, in 1832, to 7,108*l.*; in 1792, the expenditure on prosecutions was 1,020*l.*, but in 1832, they cost 6,500*l.* He admitted that the malt-tax was principally paid by the consumer, but he thought that even the hon. Member for Lambeth would admit that, though directly the tax was paid by the consumer, yet that indirectly it affected the landlord. It enhanced the price of beer—this enhanced price of beer diminished the demand for it — the diminished demand caused a smaller quantity of barley to be cultivated, and the lessened price of barley was *pro tanto* a tax upon the barley land, or as Adam Smith, he believed, said, it had the same effect as if the barley land were stricken with barrenness; that if five quarters could be grown according to the usual nature of things with the malt-tax, only three quarters would be produced. He was convinced, however, that if they repealed the Corn-laws, the malt-tax would not survive a single year. The Gentlemen opposite said, that if there was to be a free trade in corn, there should be a free trade in all articles of consumption, and he (Sir J. Graham) felt certain, that if this were carried out, no power on earth would be able to maintain the malt-tax for another year. If all restrictions were removed, why was the landlord to be precluded from cultivating tobacco in this country. Why should a tax of 1,200 per cent. be imposed on its growth? They might thus go on in other articles, and if they came to this, the whole system of finance must go. This was not a time to think of such a thing, or to attempt such an experiment, for whether they looked to the state of our possessions in India, whether they looked to our relations with the United States, whether they turned their attention to Canada, whether they thought of the proceeding at Buenos Ayres, or whether they looked to our own shores, they would see many reasons for supposing that an increased expenditure would be necessary, and an attempt at such a time to alter the whole of our financial system was little short of madness. The right hon. Gentleman, the President of the Board of Trade, had, on a former occasion, quoted from a work which he attributed, though erroneously, to him (Sir J. Graham); and in the present debate the right hon. Gentleman had referred to a work of his in 1826; in fact, he thought that his work formed a regular stock in trade for the Board of Trade. The right hon. Gentleman had taken the trouble to commit to memory a passage of the last work, but he had so halted in the delivery, and he had so marred the quotation, both the English and the Latin, that Tacitus himself, in a society of Romans, would not have been recognized. In that work, he (Sir J. Graham) had recommended a fixed duty on corn; he would not shrink from the avowal of it; but it was under the law then in force that he had recommended a fixed duty—that fixed duty, however, was 15*s.* a-quarter; and it was to be accompanied by an entire alteration of our financial system. He had, moreover, recommended that the taxes on consumption should be removed, and he had adopted that recommendation from an essay by Mr. Hume, not the hon. Gentleman opposite, however, but Mr. Hume, the able historian and the essayist; and he had proposed to alter all the taxes imposed upon land. But he would not allow that there was any inconsistency in the course he had adopted. He had supported Mr. Huskisson in 1821, and Mr. Canning, in 1827, when he brought forward a fluctuating scale of duty, which was directly opposed to the then existing law, and which, in lieu of a prohibition, proposed an unrestricted power of importation; he had agreed in it; although opposed politically to the Duke of Wellington, he had supported him in his bill of 1828. He went into the Committee on the state of agriculture in 1833, and he had had the honour of drawing up the report then agreed to. In 1834, when a member of Earl Grey's Government, he took his full share of responsibility in defence of the existing Corn-laws; and in 1836, he had again taken part in the agricultural inquiry, together with the noble Lord, the Member for Stroud, the right hon. Gentleman, the President of the Board of Trade, and the noble Lord, the Secretary at War; and when those hon. Members, on the persuasion of the noble Lord, tried to introduce into the report a recommendation of a fixed duty, he (Sir J. Graham) took the sense of the Committee against the recommendation, and carried it against the three members of her Majesty's Government. So much for the inconsistency; but he would not stand on so low a ground. He wrote the work which had been referred to in the year 1826, immediately after the great crisis of 1825, just when the Small Note Act, which had been introduced in 1822 by Lord Londonderry, for the purpose of staving off the effect of the bill of the right hon. Baronet of 1819, was about to be suspended, and he argued that the restoration in our monetary system on a sudden, would have a fatal effect on the agricultural interest. He had failed in impressing his views upon the House or the country, and he now said, with respect to the currency, that that line of conduct, which might have been everything that was just, and everything that was equitable in 1826, might be full of the greatest fraud in 1838. He was not vain of his own work; there were, he knew, many errors, in it, and he had since had the benefit of an enlarged experience; he had since acquired a more intimate knowledge of public affairs, and he might be allowed to say that his judgment had been somewhat matured by the acquisition of subsequent knowledge, and of subsequent experience. To quit the subject of the books, he held himself no longer bound by any part of that publication, and he should always endeavour to deal with all questions that should be presented to his attention, and which involved considerations of public policy, in such a way as he thought the necessity of the case and the interests of the country demanded. He was satisfied, and the character of the noble Lord opposite was a sufficient guarantee of the fact, that this motion for departing from the existing Corn-laws had been adopted and taken up by him on a sudden. The noble Lord shook his head, but he was really giving him credit for being a man of honour and integrity, and he was convinced that he did not contemplate any change a short time ago, and he thought that no consideration should have induced the noble Lord to introduce the English Tithe Commutation Act into that House if he had then intended to sanction any departure from the existing Corn-law; but if, on the contrary, the noble Lord should state to the House that such had been his object, he (Sir J. Graham) could find no milder mode of expressing himself than in saying that a gross fraud had been practised upon the House. He would call the attention of the House to the bearing of that measure upon the owners of land. The bill was introduced in 1835 by the noble Lord, in order that a permanent commutation of tithes in England might be effected, and it directed that the commutation should take place upon a calculation of the value of the land during the seven years previously to its enactment, and in order to explain more distinctly his meaning, he would state a supposititious case to the House. Supposing the case of a landowner in Kent, in which county, probably, if the repeal of the Corn-laws were effected, land would first be thrown out of cultivation, who possessed the whole of a parish, and that his rent was 2,000*l*. per annum, and that that rent was one-fourth of the value of the whole produce of the land, which therefore, amounted to 8,000*l*. a year, and that this was the average value during the last seven years—the amount of his tithe would be about 500*l*. a-year, or somewhere about 200 quarters of wheat, and that must remain the tithe commutation for ever. But, suppose that this law were repealed, and that, in consequence, a great portion of his land would be thrown out of employment, by which a fall of one-half would be produced in the value of his land—that the amount of his rent dropped from 2,000*l*. to 1,000*l*.—that of the produce of the land from 8,000*l*. to 4,000*l*., would the tithe also fall in amount? No such thing—then the 200 quarters were fixed as the commutation to be paid, and nothing could alter it. But it appeared to him that the course which was proposed would inflict the greatest injustice on Ireland; and he looked at the consequence of the change in that country with the utmost alarm. What had been the operation of the measures passed during the last century relating to that country? Take the case of a landlord who had made the usual covenant that the occupier of the soil should bear all the burdens on the land, which of course would include tithe composition, as well as all others. What did the House do last Session? They imposed a burden on the landlord which he not only had never contemplated he should be compelled to pay, but which he had actually covenanted he should not pay; and in the very same year when they imposed a poor-rate upon that country, they provided that he should bear one half of that impost also. The result of the debates which had taken place on the subject of Ireland, showed this—that no man who was a landlord, however religiously and carefully he might perform the duties which fell to his share, was secure against assassination—that he was unable to maintain his legitimate rights, and that the ejectment of tenants from the dwellings which they held there was no longer possible—now if the same system which had been introduced in Ireland were introduced here, why should not England be placed in the same condition as that unhappy country? The Irish tenant would not long be able to pay rent—he could not be ejected, as he had already stated—and he thought that the repeal of the Corn-laws would be neither more nor less than an agrarian law, procuring the ruin and extinction of all landlords, and making them outcasts and penniless. These arguments had turned much upon the relative prices under every Corn-law and under every former system. He had no longer the advantage of official documents which in 1833 he had possessed; but upon the question of steadiness of price, he had drawn up a comparative statement of the fluctuations which had taken place between the years 1797 and 1833, which he had inserted in the report which had been published, and which he had framed as he had before stated. He had drawn the comparison between various periods, which he had marked out for himself, and he found that in the first period, which embraced the years from 1797 to 1802, the variation was 220 per cent.; from 1802 to 1806 it was 100 per cent.; from 1807 to 1811 it was 74 per cent.; from 1812 to 1816 it was 183 per cent.; from 1817 to 1821 it was 143 per cent.; from 1822 to 1826 it was 81 per cent.; and then, since the operation of the existing law, from 1828 to 1833, the variation which in the antecedent period had been 81 per cent.; fell to 49 per cent.—the smallest variation ever known in this country during any other corresponding length of time. He had not been able to bring his comparisons down to the present time; but he had obtained such information as enabled him to do so to the year 1836, and he found that from 1833 to 1836, when the highest price of wheat in England was 56*s.* 6*d.*, and the lowest 36*s.* 6*d.*, the variation was just 19¼ per cent. The right hon. Gentleman, the President of the Board of Trade, had carried on the subject to the present year, and he had shown great fluctuations to have occurred since the date to which he had referred; but he had already stated that that might be the effect of the bad harvests which it was too well known had visited this country. But excluding that from their consideration, no period could be produced in which it was well authenticated that a fluctuation had taken place so small as that which appeared during the last nine years. But there was a remarkable circumstance which he hoped the House would allow him to call to their attention as bearing upon the subject, and showing that a fixed duty did anything but produce steadiness of price. In the United States there was a corn-law with a fixed duty, the amount of which, in New York, was 8*s.* 4*d.* per quarter, and he would read to the House the variations in the price of flour which had taken place there. The right hon. Baronet here read the following statement:

> "In the 'American Almanack' there is a table, said to be carefully compiled from authentic data, of the prices of flour for the first three months in every year from 1796 to 1837, both inclusive. Taking the January quotations, they stand thus:—
>
> 1834 . . 5 dollars 25 cents per barrel.
> 1835 . . 4 —— 87 —— ditto.
> 1836 . . 6 —— 50 —— ditto.
> 1837 . . 11 —— 0 —— ditto.
>
> The writer remarks, that the whole table

'indicates great and sudden changes in the market, and shows, that notwithstanding the price of flour was unusually high in 1837, yet it had been repeatedly still higher within the period embraced in the table.' Thus in
1816 the price was 9 dollars 0 cents per barrel.
1817 . . . . 13 —— 50 —— ditto.
1818 . . . . 10 —— 0 —— ditto.
And receded in 1819 . to 9 dollars per bar.
———————— 1820 . to 6 ——— ditto.
———————— 1821 . to 4 ——— ditto.
The prices were in 1829 8 dol. 50 cts. per bar.
———————— 1830 4 — 62 —— ditto.
———————— 1831 6 — 12 —— ditto.

There is nothing in the history of Corn-law prices in this country to compare with the violent fluctuations which the whole American table exhibits, and yet there are no Corn-laws in America, as everybody knows, and we are often reminded; it is the country, par excellence, of the economists, for cheap bread, good wages, and no taxation, and yet bread is not very unfrequently higher priced there than here. The fact results clearly, therefore, that however the scale be modified, it is to the principle of the ascending and descending scale, that the more moderate fluctuations comparatively, and the equilibrium in the corn prices of this country are to be attributed. The facts are there to bear us out; let the Corn-law agitators controvert them if they can."

But, after all, there was some inconsistency in saying, that the price of produce in this country would be lowered by an alteration of the law. He was convinced, that the immediate effect of such a change would be to throw out of cultivation a large tract of inferior soil; and after that there would be a large increase in the price of corn, consequent upon British land being thrown out of cultivation by the introduction of a foreign supply. But had nothing been done under the existing law to insure the steadiness of the home supply? He knew that a passage had been quoted which showed, that even in ordinary years, this country was dependent for a part of its supply upon foreign countries; but every year he lived he was opposed more and more to placing dependence upon speculative calculations. In 1836 he had intended to move an amendment to the report of the Committee which had sat, but he had omitted to do so; yet he held in his hand a copy of that amendment, and, with the permission of the House, he would read it.

"In the report of the agricultural committee of 1833 an opinion is expressed, that 'The United Kingdom in years of ordinary production is partially dependent on the supply of wheat from foreign countries;' and that 'a diminished supply of home-grown corn, with an increasing demand, has rendered this nation now annually dependent for a portion of its supply on importations from abroad.'

"It is necessarily involved in doubt and obscurity, since the average annual amount of produce depends, in some degree, on the varying cycle of seasons, and still more on the fluctuating application of fresh capital and of increased skill and industry to the cultivation of the soil. But your committee, on a careful review of the opinion expressed by the committee in 1833, are disposed to believe that it requires modification, even if it be not erroneous and contradicted, by evidence in proof before your committee. The crop of 1834 was not greater than an average; but the crops of 1833 and 1835 were not unusually large, yet throughout this period, and for several antecedent years, no foreign wheats had been admitted for home consumption. The population in the meantime has rapidly increased; manufacturing prosperity and a higher rate of wages have led to the more general use of bread corn; nevertheless increased production has kept pace with the growing demand; nay, more, it would seem even to have outstripped it; improved means of communication with more fertile and distant lands—the extent to which underdraining has been carried—the larger use of manure consequent on sheep feeding in districts which now send fat cattle by steam to London, and to the crowded marts of a dense population, but which heretofore exported only live stock to be grazed and fattened in the southern districts of England—all these and other circumstances have contributed to the supply of a larger quantity of home-grown wheat at a diminished cost of production and not on the probability of accuracy to the original assertion of the agricultural committee, of 1821, 'that the annual produce of corn, the growth of the United Kingdom, is upon an average crop about equal to the annual consumption.'

"In the highly artificial state of this country, where skill, capital, and enterprise combine with industry to overcome natural difficulties, at different periods with varying success; it is never safe to pronounce absolutely on conjectural points of this abstract nature; and, warned by the example of two antecedent committees, your committee desire to indicate opinion, rather than to declare a decided judgment.

"The price of wheat for the last three years has not, on the average, exceeded 46*s.* 1*d.* per quarter; the highest price within the same period was 56*s.* 5*d.*, the lowest 36*s.*; and the average rate of fluctuation calculated on the current price amounts only to 19 1-3 per cent.

"Thus a price most moderate for the consumer, and steady for the grower, continues to be coincident with the present system of Corn-laws; and your committee are confirmed in the opinion expressed by the committee of 1833, 'that this steadiness of price which unquestionably has prevailed, may fairly be ascribed to the Corn-laws as now established.' "

This was the amendment which it had been his intention to have proposed to the House to the report of the committee of 1636, had it been presented. Subsequent experience confirmed the view which he had taken then; from the period of the enactment of the present Corn-laws, the progress in the growth and cultivation of corn had had the effect of producing annually a greater quantity of corn at a reduced price, and that result was produced notwithstanding the increase of population. He should then say, if they would but "leave well alone," this country might, for an indefinite period, maintain its own population, and secure to them an abundance of bread corn without the aid of any foreign supplies. He now felt that he was approaching the most important part of this most important subject—namely, its effect in the displacement of labour—of course, he alluded to its effects in the displacement of agricultural labour. There could not be a more gross error than to suppose, that the lands now used for the growth of wheat, were lands recently brought into cultivation for that purpose; facts showed the reverse of this. The greater portion of the wheat lands of England were old lands used for that purpose during very many years. It could not be disputed by any one having the least acquaintance with the subject, that the old lands were those now in use for the production of wheat. It was equally certain, that the cultivation of those lands required a great amount of manual labour; that every fresh improvement in agriculture increased the demand for that labour, and that, in this respect, agriculture and manufactures presented a striking contrast; for, whereas every fresh improvement in manufactures had for its object to dispense with a certain quantity of human labour, every improvement in agriculture gave employment to additional hands. In his judgment, there could be no greater benefit conferred on the country than measures which had a tendency to increase the demand for agricultural labour, and he felt most strongly persuaded, that if the Poor-law Amendment Act could be said to have one quality more than another, it was that of a direct tendency to increase the demand for manual labour. After the best reflection which he could bestow upon the subject, and, viewing it in every possible light, he did not hesitate to declare his conviction, that a free importation of corn must produce the same effect in England that the law of agistment had produced in Ireland. He saw opposite to him the son of an illustrious father, who, in the last century, foretold all the evils, or at least a large portion of the evils, which had since befallen that unhappy country; he said, that the law of agistment would prey upon its own authors with a hundredfold force, and that peace would flee the land. There was truth in these words; for no man possessing a competent knowledge, and free from prejudice, would deny, for a moment, that that law of agistment had laid the foundation of those predial disturbances which ever since had proved the source of so much misery in that part of the United Kingdom, and which had reduced it to its present unhappy state. The conversion of arable land into pasture, would, he had not the shadow of a doubt, have the same effect in this country. Let them but once diminish the consumption of British grown corn, and from that moment the consumption of iron, of hardware, of cotton, and of woollens, must decline. There would come a fresh displacement of labour, and a fresh lowering of wages; and discontent, disturbance, and misery, would prove its inevitable consequences. The noble Lord opposite, in his letter upon this subject, addressed to his constituents, had told them, that it would only be a new diversion of capital, a transfer of it into other channels. The noble Viscount, too, (Howick) said, it would be only directing labour into new channels. The President of the Board of Trade, in the lofty phraseology of the economists, spoke of labour as a commodity, and as though labourers were without feelings, habits, or attachments, independent of the influence of early associations, or the ties of kindred; that they might be dealt with as machines, or at best as animals of an inferior order, who, as long as they could find employment, would be content to receive it in any part of the country. Oh! let the House well reflect before they took any step which directly or indirectly tended to these displacements of labour. Little did did they know the suffering and the sorrow which lay hid beneath these "quietly flowing waters." Little could they estimate the wretchedness which sprang from change of habit, of house, of manners, of the mode of life itself. What change more cruel could despotism itself inflict than a change from "the breezy call of the incense breathing morn," to a painful and grievous obedience to the sad sound of the factory bell—the relinquishment of the thatched cottage, the blooming garden, and the village green, for the foul garret, or the dark cellar of the crowded city—the enjoyment of the rural walk of the innocent rustic Sabbath, for the debauchery, the temptations, the pestilence, the sorrows, and the sins, of a congregated multitude? Where were their moralists that their voices were not raised against the fearful consequences which the proposed change brought in its train? Talk to him of sending the Poles to Siberia, or the Hill Coolies from the Coromandel to the Mauritius; the authors of the intended change contemplated the perpetration within the limits of their native land, of a cruelty far more atrocious. It was the first step towards making England the workshop of the world, dependent for its daily food upon continental supplies. He hoped that the proposition would not be successful. Were it to succeed, he should say, with his Friend Lord Ashburton, that this was the last country which he should wish to inhabit. The evil itself was of the most fearful character; but the next worst thing to its actual infliction, was the apprehension of its advent—the fear of the change, was almost as distressing as the actual change itself—he, therefore, could not hesitate to give his cordial and decided opposition to the motion.

Lord *John Russell* spoke to the following effect: During the many years that I have had the honour of holding a seat in this House, and frequently as I have heard the question of the Corn-laws discussed, I do not think that it has ever happened to me that I have addressed the House, upon that subject, preferring to listen to others, whom I thought more competent to address the House upon the subject than I am, and to instruct it by the examination they had made into the various details, as well as the great principles which the question involved, than to attempt to take a part in those debates myself. I therefore enter with great diffidence on the consideration of this subject, but at the same time I feel that upon this question I cannot agree with either of the two parties who take extreme views upon it. When Mr. Canning spoke in 1827, he said that extreme views were entertained by different parties, some of whom were advocates for the total repeal of the Corn-laws, and entirely free trade; while others contended for the opposite extreme in supporting the then existing law. There is nothing new, therefore, either in the proposition of the hon. Member for Wolverhampton, or in that which is contended for by hon. Members who have spoken from the other side of the House, and who propose to maintain the existing law. But I do not feel that I can agree with either of these parties, and therefore I conceive that what I have to say will be received with little favour by the great majority of hon. Members of this House. I have, however, to allude to reproaches cast upon me first by the right hon. Baronet, the Member for Kent (Sir Edward Knatchbull), and secondly by the right hon. Member for Pembroke, who has just sat down, that I in 1822 wrote a letter to my constituents, which contained a different opinion to that which I now entertain, and in support of which I propose to give my vote. But in that respect I received much consolation from the right hon. Baronet who last spoke, when he said he considered himself no longer bound by the work he had written in 1826, for I too am entitled to profit by experience, and to take advantage of my mind being matured by reflection and the knowledge which I have since gained. I admit the justification which the right hon. Baronet has given of his own conduct, and I was glad to find that he had so great sympathy for those who were in the same situation with himself; and surely if the arguments which he has used form a sufficient ground of exemption for him from an opinion expressed in 1826, surely I may hope to be permitted to be exempted from an opinion expressed by me in 1822; for if I were not allowed to gather those benefits which he has described from experience and reflection, and which he is allowed, the measure of justice dealt out to me would be hard indeed. There was, I believe, a great and eminent painter of this country who, after travelling many years in foreign countries, and gaining much experience in painting, said, upon seeing one of his early productions, that it was mortifying that he had not made much greater progress than he appeared to have done. Now I hope that I have not to feel that mortification; and in respect to my letter of 1822, I have drawn some advantage from experience and reflection; and that having given that opinion, as I did, most honestly and conscientiously to my constituents of that time, I may be allowed to withdraw from an opinion which political observation and the laws which have since been enacted lead me to believe was erroneous. There is another observation of the right hon. Baronet, who has just sat down, which likewise gives me some excuse for the opinion which I now hold. He tells us that if it can be shown that the burden on the landed interest is diminished, the landowner will be ready to reconsider the scale of duties of 1828. Now, if that be admitted, as those burdens have been lessened, I am justified in thinking that this will be a proper time of reconsidering this question. Whatever may be the just opinion with respect to the Corn-laws—when agricultural distress and the Poor-laws weighed upon the landed interest with aggravated burden, it was desirable not to enter into the question with a view to the alteration of the law, which might aggravate the distresses, and increase the burdens, but now when the burden has been much diminished since the enactment of the New Poor-law. [*"Oh, oh!"*] Some hon. Gentleman seems to doubt the fact, but I may venture to state, on the authority of a gentleman, whose name, I am sure will satisfy the House of the truth of his statement, that land which he possesses has since the enactment of that law fetched a price equal to three years' purchase more than he could previously have obtained for it, I think I am entitled to make the allegation which I did; wherefore I say that with regard to the diminution of the burdens upon the landholder, that is one of the reasons which induced me to believe, that the question may be now fairly entered into. There is another point upon which I disagree with the right hon. Baronet, but upon which also I found my opinion, that this is the proper time when the question should be re-considered if it ought to be re-considered at all. The right hon. Baronet has stated, that the last year was one of almost extreme scarcity, but I cannot agree to that allegation. The inquiries which I made after the last harvest did not lead me to that conclusion, and I am fully persuaded, that if it had not been for some fine weather at the time of the harvest, that the crop of wheat which was otherwise good, would have been far more injured than it was. I have also received a letter from a gentleman, who was formerly a Member of this House for the county of Nottingham, in which he told me, that the farmers in his neighbourhood had generally a good crop, averaging forty bushels an acre; and, therefore, I say, that the harvest has not been so remarkably deficient as the right hon. Gentleman would wish the House to believe. This is the time, then, at which you may come to a decision upon the question, which at another period you may be unable to do. If you persist till the harvest has been far more deficient, or till it shall have failed generally, and wheat reached famine prices, it will be impossible to legislate in any other way than by refusing to interfere at all, or by acceding to the total repeal, and not adopting any modified duties. Now with respect to the present Corn-laws, I differ also with the right hon. Baronet as to his conception of the nature and operation of the law, and the manner in which it has answered the intentions of its authors. The law, previously to 1827, was founded on the principles of prohibition. Mr. Canning proposed a new enactment, on the ground, that the principle of prohibition was not recognized in respect of other articles; and he stated, that his object was, to produce a steadiness of price, and he selected 60*s.* as the medium price, which was to vary accordingly, between 55*s.* and 65*s.* Now, my argument is, that the law has not answered this expectation of Mr. Canning; for, instead of the price fluctuating between those sums he mentioned; it has varied from 36*s.* to 82*s.*, instead of being a steady price, it has been one continually varying, and instead of its having caused a regular trade, the effect of it has been, as my right hon. Friend the President of the Board of Trade has stated, that three-fourths of the corn admitted has been at a low duty, not exceeding 6*s.* per quarter. Now, that shows that the anticipation of Mr. Canning has not been realised, and if the effect of the law has been different from that which was expected, and if the high duties have had the effect of almost prohibiting the importation of wheat under the scale which he proposed, his object has not been answered. With the view, therefore, and the intention of the law itself before us, we should go into a Committee of the House, in order to consider whether we cannot introduce some law more in accordance with the principles and feelings of the original framers of that statute which is now in existence, and although I do not believe, that the law of Mr. Canning introduced in 1827 will answer the present purpose, yet I think, that if the Act, which was altered in 1828, were taken into consideration, a determination might be arrived at upon the subject which would realise the wishes of those who consider the present laws as productive of great evil. If it be true, then, as I think it is, that this law has not insured the object which its framers had in view; if it have all the faults of the former law pointed out in the report of the Committee of 1821—faults which consisted, in the first place, of the obstruction of trade, in the next place, of placing capital in unprofitable employment; and in the last place, of injuring the very persons themselves for whose advantage the prohibition was made; then, I ask, whether the manufacturers are not entitled to call on you to consider their case? and whether you are not called on to admit whether they have suffered considerable disadvantage from their having been compelled to take your corn at your own prices. You may say, that there is still a considerable advantage in their favour, and that manufactures are still flourishing; but I do not see in that fact anything to induce me to say that I will not go into committee to consider this law, because if manufactures are still prosperous to a great degree, yet if it is sure, that a great foreign competition is arising against us, which is becoming more formidable every year, then the present state of the manufacturing interest, so far from being a reason for not considering the subject, becomes at once one of the most cogent reasons, that can be urged for proceeding without loss of time to consider it. We should consider ourselves fortunate that no great distress had as yet overtaken our manufactures; but if we find, nevertheless, that although no ruinous effect has hitherto arisen,—yet if we find foreign manufactures increasing, our own driven from the neutral markets, and our manufacturing population starving and without employment—if, I say, instead of the present comparative prosperous state of our manufactures, our case was, that we were utterly unable to meet the competition of foreigners, and consequently, that we were in a state of the utmost distress, then there would be, indeed, a reason for saying, that we had committed a great error in the enactment of this Corn-law, and for retracing our steps without delay, if it were not too late. We might then wish to regain the ground we had lost, but it might be then beyond our power, for the foreigner would already have thoroughly established his manufactures; the advantageous market would already have been preoccupied! and it would then be in vain to hope, by a change in the system of the Corn-laws, to re-establish that prosperity which would have departed from us for ever. Then, Sir, I say, that instead of the present comparative profits of our manufacturers being urged as a reason for keeping things as they are, on the contrary, the fact of a foreign competition having risen up, even although it have not become completely ruinous to the manufacturer at home, affords the strongest possible reason why, at this moment, we ought not to lose another year in the consideration of the subject. There is, however, another most important branch of the question, which is, that growers of corn, for whose benefit the laws were intended, have been losers by them, to a very great extent. My right hon. Friend, the President of the Board of Trade, showed, in the early part of this debate, that for several years past, in addresses from the Throne to Parliament, the distressed state of the agricultural classes has been adverted to — that committees were appointed, which, from time to time, reported, that those distresses were very great. And is there no cause for all this? Yes, there is a good reason; for if you shut the ports against foreign corn, and, at the same time, tell the British corn-grower, that by your laws you have secured him a permanent high price, you induce him to over-cultivate; and then, there being no vent by which he can sell his produce, he becomes the greatest sufferer, by that which was devised for his protection and benefit. Now, if this be the case with regard to this law, I think, we are in the position in which we were with regard to some other articles of trade as to which the policy of the country was changed by the advice of Mr. Huskisson. It was formerly an opinion, that agriculture and manufactures should both be fostered by prohibitory duties. That policy was adopted. Those manufactures did not flourish, exposed, as they were, to continual reverses, to the alternations of prosperity and distress. Mr. Huskisson proposed to Parliament to make a change in that respect, and to allow, on the payment of a moderate duty, the introduction of foreign manufactures. One of the first articles on which the change was proposed was that of silk. I remember, that it was stated in this House by a great authority —no less an authority than Lord Ashburton—that to do away with the prohibition and substitute a duty of thirty per cent., would be ruinous to the manufacturers. The same statement was also frequently made after the change had taken place. Now, what is the actual result? I have inquired into the extent of our consumption of raw silk for our manufactures imported from foreign countries in consequence of that change. The average imports of the years 1820, 1821, and 1822 were 2,621,543 pounds; of 1836, 1837, and 1838, 5,407,666 pounds — being an increase of 108 per cent., notwithstanding the introduction of foreign silk manufactures. There is another article on which prohibition used to be the rule—gloves. I remember a petition being presented to this House, from a firm in the West of England, wherein the petitioners stated, that the French made their gloves much cheaper and better than we did, and they, therefore, prayed the House to ordain, that the people should continue to buy their gloves dear and ill-made, because, if the better and cheaper articles of foreign manufacture were allowed to come in, they would be ruined. But what has been the result? Of kid skins and lamb skins for gloves the average imported during the years 1820, 1821, and 1822 were 2,016,436; and during 1836, 1837, and 1838, 3,169,552, showing a clear increase of 57 per cent. I remember, too, an instance of a similar kind given by Arthur Young in his travels in France, after the Treaty of Commerce in 1786. He mentions, that the French manufacturers of earthenware, so dreaded the introduction of English earthenware, that they declared it would ruin them; but within two years afterwards, instead of that result, their manufacture of the article was improved, for they had, in the mean time, copied English patterns, and were able at last to enter into a successful competition with the manufactures of this country. With these facts before me, I must at once confess, that I think, that if other articles —corn for instance—were allowed to be regularly imported at a low fixed duty, the effect would be the same as in the instances of silk gloves, wool and earthenware, and, moreover, I am quite convinced, that the result would be the improvement of agriculture. I feel assured, that agriculture has suffered by the operation of this monopoly which it has been attempted to give them, and which was not intended by the bill of 1827. Indeed I think it is a proof of this fact, that my noble Friend, Lord Spencer, thought it necessary last year to put himself at the head of an association for the improvement of agriculture. I think if there were greater freedom, the farmers would pay more attention, and exercise greater skill, and I have the concurrent opinions of Lord Spencer and many others of the greatest weight and name in the agriculture of the country, that such would be the case. Indeed it is impossible to drive through the country without perceiving the great difference between the farms of intelligent, skilful farmers, and those who are careless; and I think there can scarcely be a doubt, that the increased competition would cause an increased activity on the part of the farmers. There are two or three other reasons which are urged by those who oppose a change; one of these most prominently put forward, is, that in case of repeal we should be rendering ourselves dependent on foreign countries for our supply of corn. I own I cannot understand how such an argument can be considered conclusive in a country like ours, which is not a country shut out from all the world, but one depending for its flourishing condítition upon its great imports of raw material for the purposes of our manufactures. The advocates of the present system say we could not get corn enough from foreign countries; but, surely this can scarcely have any weight with the House, when we remember, that we have almost the whole world to draw supplies of corn from. We can, hardly, Sir, be rationally in fear of being in such a situation, after having gone through a great revolutionary war, during which the whole of the ports of the Continent were shut against us. Surely, there would be some place on the face of the globe from which we could obtain corn. Mr. Huskisson, in one of his last speeches, stated, that two millions of the population of this country were dependent for their activity on the imports of cotton from foreign countries, and, that half a million more were dependent in like manner on the importation of silk. Now the first of these articles we derive from America, and the latter chiefly from France, and it would require nothing more than a combination of these two powers to reduce this country to the greatest distress—to starve by their mere fiat, two millions and a half of our population. If you are to have no dependence whatever on foreign countries for the supply of the articles of import which you want, you have lost the opportunity of rectifying yourself, because you have allowed yourself to become utterly dependent on foreign countries for articles, the non-supply of which would throw two millions and a-half of the people into distress and poverty. If those countries were to do anything so unnatural to their own people as to prohibit the exportation of cotton and silk, I will venture to say, that my right hon. Friend, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, would find, on presenting the next budget, a considerable failure in the revenue. The best security against any such conduct on the part of foreign governments is, that it is against their own interest. The rulers of those countries would never enact laws so injurious to their own people, and that would be the security of this country against the apprehended evil. It is true, that when, in times of scarcity, you have gone to foreign countries for your corn, you have found that, on the particular occasion, the exportation has been prohibited, because your sudden and unusual demand, if complied with, would be inconvenient to the growing country itself. To buy that corn you would be obliged to export bullion, greatly to the deranging of your exchanges; but if you had once established a regular settled trade, no foreign Power could put a prohibition upon exportation; and instead of having to export bullion in exchange for the corn, you would be called upon to supply manufactures. There is another danger on which the right hon. Gentleman has likewise laid great stress —the danger that a great portion of our own people now engaged in agriculture would be thrown out of employment by the country being partially thrown out of cultivation. That assertion proceeds on the supposition that there would be at once an immense deluge of foreign corn, which I apprehend, would not be the case, as there is not at present, land under cultivation abroad to give us any such supply. You also suppose, that the population of this country will always be stationary. Assuming your statements to be the fact, I admit there might be some danger of the evil apprehended. But what is the state of the country as regards population? Why, it is continually increasing. With such an increase, why should the land be thrown out of cultivation? How would the Corn-laws apply when the population had increased one-third, and when it had doubled? Do you propose that the same land which is now able to produce corn for the existing population, should be made to produce food for double the number? In 1800, the population in Great Britain was 10,900,000. In the present year, calculating the increase in the same ratio as in the ten years prior to 1831, the population must be 18,521,000; and in four or five years, if the increase should proceed at the same rate as during the ten years from 1821 to 1831, we shall have double the population we had in 1800. Therefore, what you require is not only security that the same amount of land shall be cultivated, but that the people continue to be fed by the same soil, even though it be required to produce twice as much. And now, as I have alluded to the population in 1800, I will refer to what the law of 1821 proposed. If I mistake not, it fixed a very high duty until wheat was up to 63*s.*; when it arrived at 63*s.*, the duty was immediately reduced to 2*s.* 6*d.*, and when it reached 66*s.*, it was to be reduced to 6*d.* The law of 1821 proposed to permit the importation of corn for a population of upwards of eleven millions, at a duty of no more than 2*s.* 6*d.* Yet, at the present moment, by your laws, with a population in Great Britain rapidly progressing, and not less now than eighteen millions, you do not allow corn to be imported without duty till the price reaches 73*s.* per quarter. It would be consonant to my own views to have a Corn-law resembling that which you had in former days. Let us, at least, go back to the system of 1801. Do not say, in 1839, in the present state of manufactures, and with the great increase of population all over the world, you will have a more strict prohibition than you had thirty-eight years ago. Sir, I am of opinion, that the best system would be one of a moderate fixed duty. That was the inclination of my mind in 1828, when the present law was proposed. The Government of that day proposed a different law, however, and I did not feel confidence enough in my own opinion to oppose a measure which had the sanction of Mr. Huskisson, in order to vote for that which I myself preferred—a fixed duty. But I must say, that what has passed since 1828 has shown me that the object then proposed—that there should be a constant trade in corn, has not been attained, and that the law has in that respect failed, and I, therefore, come back to my original opinion, and say, I think it would be far better to change the system, and make a considerable reduction in the present rate of duty. The right hon. Baronet opposite has alluded to my opinions formerly expressed to my constituents in Devonshire. I certainly know that when I was Member for Devon, as now, when I am Member for Stroud, my constituents never objected to the principle of a fixed duty, though, as regarded what should be the amount of that duty, there was a considerable difference of opinion. I will now add a few words on the subject which was also alluded to by the right hon. Baronet, and by the right hon. Baronet who last addressed the House—I mean the subject of the Government leaving the Corn-law an open question. The right hon. Baronet, when he made so direct and broad an attack on the Government of this country, with regard to important questions being made open questions, and individual members of the Government being allowed to vote on such questions as they thought proper, can hardly have sufficiently considered the political history of the country on this subject. In the earlier period of the last century, much unanimity and accordance of opinion among the members of a government does not seem to have been thought necessary; but if you look back to the past parliamentary history, you will find that there was scarcely an administration that was not divided on some great question. The administrations of Pitt and Fox were both divided on the great question of Parliamentary Reform. The Administration afterwards established by Mr. Pitt was divided on the subject of the slave trade, and he himself was constantly left in a minority on that question; and you will find, that after his death, the Administration of 1806 agreed not to press the Catholic question at that time, being divided on that question. It is true that from 1806 to 1812 this country had the benefit of an Administration that was not divided in opinion; but that was an Administration to which I am not accustomed to look back with feelings of great gratulation. In 1812 came a declaration that the Catholic question was to be considered as an open question, and the same principle was acted on until 1829. But in 1827 the Catholic question being an open question, Mr. Tierney and Mr. Abercromby entered the Administration on the understanding that they were to give their votes in favour of Parliamentary Reform. The Ministry that succeeded was for a year divided on the subject of Catholic emancipation, which continued until 1829, when that division of opinion ceased. Now Sir, all these Administrations may have been wrong, but I think, seeing that many great men have from time to time joined Administrations on the principle of allowing Members to entertain separate opinions on important questions, the more candid interpretation will be, that there must be something in the state of our constitution and of our representative government which makes it very difficult to form any Administration of individuals entirely of the same opinion on all the great questions that come before Parliament. I will at once confess that I think division of opinion on great questions such as Parliamentary Reform and the Roman Catholic question greatly to be deplored. I think the division of opinion on the Catholic Question, though justifiable up to 1812, ceased to be so before the dissolution of that Administration; but then it was a question of immense difficulty and importance, and I well remember that when I urged it against Mr. Canning, the answer of the right hon. Gentleman was, that it was impossible to adopt the principle of agreement of opinion; because, if he were called upon to act in one way as regarded Catholic emancipation, or abandon his party, he must then either join no party at all or act with others as regarded Parliamentary Reform, to which he could not agree. I think, therefore, that in the present day it is impossible to construct a Ministry, the members of which will not differ on some great question. As regards the present question, when I came into Parliament, I understood that it was considered a question on which the Government could not take a line, and I well remember the reproaches cast by the country gentlemen on Mr. Rose, because of the pamphlet which he wrote on the subject while he was Treasurer of the Navy—a pamphlet which the country gentlemen designated as seditious. In the next year the Government, however, did take a line on the subject of the Corn-laws. The right hon. Gentleman who spoke last said, that as far as he was aware, the question of the Corn-laws was not an open question in 1834. [Sir *J. Graham*: In the Cabinet of Earl Grey]. In the Cabinet of Earl Grey! Now this is really a question of mere words. Lord Althorp declared on the first night of the Session, in answer to a question from the hon. Member for Lincolnshire, that the Government was not prepared, as a Government, to propose any alteration in the Corn-laws. That was a course adopted by him for the purpose of intimating that some Members of the Government were prepared to vote on this question differently from others. In the subsequent debate on that question, the right hon. Gentleman, the President of the Board of Trade, declared, that in opposing the First Lord of the Admiralty, he did so because the question was an open question; and when the division came, sixteen Members of the Government voted with my right hon. Friend for an alteration in the Corn-laws; fourteen other persons dependent on the Government voted for the Corn-laws; and surely this was a sufficient evidence that the question of the Corn-laws was considered an open question by Lord Grey's Government. This I know, that Lord Spencer considers that it was known to be an open question. Indeed, were it otherwise, he would have been disgraced to have allowed sixteen Members of the Government to vote against him on so important a question. On the other side there is the authority of my Lords Ripon and Richmond. [An *hon. Member*: And Lord Brougham]. Yes, and Lord Brougham. But I really think if those noble Lords considered the question of Corn-laws was not an open question in Lord Grey's Government, it must be in consequence of some abrogation of the custom by which we allow a breach of privilege to be committed, and our debates to be reported—I say, some such unusual exclusion of strangers must have occurred; and those noble Lords, therefore, could not have had the opportunity of reading in the public papers reports of the debates in which the declaration of Lord Spencer and the debate on which the division I have referred to occurred. On no other ground can I reconcile the declarations of those noble Lords. Because, had it been otherwise, the sixteen Members of the Government who voted for the repeal of the Corn-laws on that occasion would have resigned. Having thus traced the history of open questions so far back, I see no reason why the same principle should not continue in operation in the present day. At the time of Lord Spencer's declaration some of the Cabinet were for the Corn-laws, and some against them. The time of the proposed change in 1824 was then most inconvenient, being within six years of the passing of the Act under which the restrictions were enforced. But in the course which I took on that occasion, I certainly never meant to bind myself not to consider the question at some future time with a view to effecting, if possible, an amelioration of the law. Nor do I now see any reason why the Government of to-day should not pursue the same course as was pursued by Lord Grey's Government on the subject of the Corn-laws, and by almost every Government on various great questions during many years. I have now concluded the various topics on which I meant to address the House, and have expressed very imperfectly I am aware, my own opinions. I trust, although what I have said may have wanted force to induce Members of this House to change their opinions, I have not used any of those arguments which I am sorry to have heard used by different Members on both sides of the House—imputations against Members of this House, that, because they are landowners on the one hand or manufacturers on the other, they have a personal interest, and that on that personal interest they give their votes. There are, no doubt, a great number of the Members of this House connected with the land, and more interested in the prosperity of the land than the manufacturers, and I am quite sure that they will come to a conscientious opinion on this subject—I believe that they will take care that any interest they may have shall not blind them to the general public interests of the country—and that the fact of their having an interest will make them the more cautious in coming to a decision; and will make them give due weight to all the arguments in favour of change. The question is of very great importance to the country. I do not mean to say, as some say, that instant ruin must follow a determination not to agree to repeal, or that increased prosperity would at once follow the adoption of the contrary course. This country has still to bear enormous burdens caused by the wars in which she thought herself bound to engage—burdens, the weight of which can not be got rid of without a breach of public faith, which I trust will never be recommended by any Member of this House. But it is in your power in some respects to lighten those burdens, to give freedom and scope to the energies of the country, to afford the means of activity to our manufactures by promoting trade with foreign nations; and I trust, if you can be prevailed on to adopt this motion, that you will do so regardless of whatever private interests may or may not be influenced by your decision. Several Members rose to address the House amidst loud cries of "question!" and "divide!"

The *Speaker* called upon Mr. Milnes.

Mr. *Milnes* proceeded to address the House, but he could not be heard on account of the noise.

The *Speaker:* While such disorder is allowed to continue, it is utterly impossible to gather the sense of the House as to its future proceedings. Any such attempt to terminate such a debate as that in which the House has been engaged, can reflect nothing but discredit on the House.

Mr. *Milnes* then proceeded to address the House for some time; but in consequence of the noise, hardly a sentence could be heard. He expressed himself strongly against the motion.

Debate again adjourned.

NATIONAL GALLERY.] Mr. *Hume* moved for Returns of the number of persons who have visited the National Gallery in each month, from September 1835 to January 1839: also the amount of salary and perquisites, if any, received by each person employed, and the principle items of miscellaneous expenses under separate heads, in each of the two past years; also the average number of students who have attended on days of study:—Of the amount of money received for admission, and of the number of persons who visited the exhibition of the royal Academy of Arts in each of the years 1836, 1837, and 1838; distinguishing the entrance money from the proceeds by the sale of catalogues; together with the amount paid in salaries and perquisites to each person employed in that establishment in each of those years; also, the miscellaneous expenses under separate heads in each of these years; and the average number of students who have attended the Life School, and that of the Antique, in each of these years. (In continuation of the account of the President and Secretary of the Royal Academy of Arts in July, 1836.) Of the amount expended in the outfit of the Government School of Design at Somerset House; distinguishing the expense of repairs of the premises and the costs of objects for the accommodation and use of the students; stating the name of each person employed, and the amount of salary and allowance to each; and also the principal items of the miscellaneous expenses up to the 1st day of January, 1839; also the number of pupils who have attended the school in each month, the rates of pay for the admittance of pupils, and the amount received for the same period.

Sir *Robert Inglis* said, that he had not opposed the production of the Returns last moved for, since the School of Design was supported entirely by grants from this House: but the case was different in respect to the Royal Academy. And he wished to know the grounds on which the hon. Member desired to ascertain the mode in which the Royal Academy expended their own funds?

Mr. *Hume* said, that the hon. Baronet need not be uneasy, since the returns, which he required, were only in continuation of those which the President of the Royal Academy, Sir Martin Shee, had himself delivered to the committee on the arts two or three years ago.

House Adjourned.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Friday, March 15, 1839.

MINUTES.] Bills. The Royal Assent was given by Commission to the Transfer of Aids; and the Poor-law (Ireland) Amendment Bills.

Petitions presented. By the Duke of Richmond, the Marquess of Downshire, the Earl of Bradford, and Lords Redesdale and Rayleigh, from several places, against the Repeal of the Corn-laws.—By Lord Redesdale, from Norwich, against the Registration of Births and Marriages Act.—By the Earl of Haddington, from Nottingham, the Duke of Richmond, from two places, and the

Marquess of Downshire, from Berkshire, against the Beer Laws.—By the Earl of Roseberry, from a number of places in Scotland, against any further Grant to the Church of Scotland.—By the Marquess of Bute, and the Earl of Kinnoul, from several places, for Church Extension in Scotland.

CORN-LAWS.] Lord *Brougham* said, he had before him a petition (it was of immense magnitude) on a subject of very great importance. It was eminently worthy of their Lordships' serious consideration, as it came from a city, which, if he excluded Dublin, was the second in the empire. He alluded to the great and flourishing city of Glasgow. The petition was the result of a great public meeting, and was signed by no less than 43,000 people; being by far the greatest number that had ever signed a petition in that city, and indeed he was not aware of more than one or two petitions having been signed by so great a number of persons on any occasion in that part of the empire. The petition related to the Corn-laws; and, as that question had been so lately, and so fully discussed, he should merely state, that it prayed for the total repeal of those laws. By the indulgence of Mr. Wright, the able editor of that most valuable work, the *Memoirs of Lord Chatham*, he had had access to a very important speech of Mr. Burke on the subject of the Corn-laws. That speech was made in the year 1770; and in referring to it, as it was not authenticated, he deemed it necessary to state (what was known to all those who were acquainted with the Parliamentary history of this country), that there was a blank in the debates from 1768 to 1774. Mr. Wright, however, had succeeded in discovering a depository to which he had obtained a clue some years ago, and from which he had obtained four volumes of most valuable documents. No man knew better how to make use of them than Mr. Wright, and he had executed his task most judiciously. It was not pretended, in these reports, to give every word of every speech; but the best course was adopted, that of singling out the best performances, and giving them with scrupulous accuracy. The speech of Mr. Burke to which he now referred was delivered on the 6th of March, 1770. On that occasion, the late Lord Sydney, then Mr. T. Townshend, said, "I shall give no opposition to this question, but we are clearly not ripe for the alteration;" that alteration being the repeal of the then Corn-laws—the very question that was now agitating the country. Mr. Burke said, in answer, "Not ripe! the hon. Member says 'We are not ripe.' Why, we are ripe for the question, till we are rotten! There is no such thing as the landed interest separate from the trading interest. What God has joined together, let no man try to separate. He who separates the interest of the consumer from the interest of the grower starves his country." He was aware, that both sides of the House might agree with this so far. But Mr. Burke went on to say, "Don't talk to me of high price or of low price—of encouraging or discouraging a true price—the just price of grain is its natural price in the universal market of the world. It has naturally no tendency to fluctuate; but it is your Corn-laws which make it fluctuate." Now, he could not but think it a remarkable circumstance, that this speech of Mr. Burke should have been found just now—a speech so much in confirmation of the two propositions, that had lately been urged before their Lordships by his noble Friend (Earl Fitzwilliam) and himself. It was an extraordinary circumstance, that they should have found the high and most unanswerable authority of this great man in support of their propositions, who, it was always to be observed, however he might have changed on other subjects, had throughout life never shown any shadow of change on the subject of the Corn-laws. The noble and learned Lord hoped, that some steps would be taken to enable Mr. Wright to publish the four volumes of documents to which he had referred. As a matter of public utility and of national utility this was to be desired. He was sorry to have been informed, that the encouragement heretofore held out for the publication of these volumes had not been sufficient to induce Mr. Wright to undertake it. He spoke now, however, in the presence of those who were able to appreciate what he stated, and he was sure, that a subject more deserving of the attention of her Majesty's Government could not be brought before it.

The Earl of *Wicklow* said, as the noble and learned Lord had laid so much stress upon the opinion of Mr. Burke, he was anxious to recall to the recollection of the noble and learned Lord (if the noble and learned Lord had ever before seen it) an opinion of another description of that same very able statesman, which he (the Earl of Wicklow) had happened to meet with the other day, when reading Prior's *Life of Mr. Burke*. Their Lordships would recollect, that the noble and learned Lord had made his observations, and read his opinion from Mr. Burke upon the occasion of his presenting a petition from the city of Glasgow. Mr. Burke said — and this was on the subject of the Corn-laws— "The cry of the people in cities and towns though, unfortunately, from fear of their multitude and combination, most regarded, ought in fact to be the least attended to, on this subject; for citizens are in a state of utter ignorance of the means by which they are to be fed, and they contribute little or nothing, except in a circuitous manner, to their own maintenance. They are *fruges consumere nati.* They are to be heard with great respect in matters within their own province, that is, with respect to trades and manufactures; but in anything that relates to agriculture, they ought to be listened to with the same deference which we pay to the dogmas of other ignorant and presumptuous men." Now, this being a recorded opinion of Mr. Burke, he (the noble Lord) begged to offer it as a set off against the opinion of Mr. Burke brought forward by the noble and learned Lord.

Lord *Brougham* was obliged to the noble Earl for giving him an opportunity of setting the noble Earl right; the fact was, that what the noble Earl quoted was no argument against him at all. All Mr. Burke said was, that the landed interest and the manufacturing interest should not be placed in opposition to each other. He did not say a word about cheap bread. Mr. Burke said, that in taking this course, he was not courting vulgar opinion. Neither was he courting vulgar opinion; when he stated his sentiments on this question. It was those on the other side who were courting vulgar opinion; and he would say, that there was not a poor porter who read his newspaper on his bulkhead who did not entertain the same ideas on this subject which he had heard in that House.

Earl *Fitzwilliam* observed, that much weight ought to be attached to the opinion of Mr. Burke. There was no man in his day more friendly to perfect freedom of trade in corn and everything else, and few men who had studied the question more diligently. In the quotation read by the noble Earl Mr. Burke must have alluded to the opinion of the lower classes.

The Earl of *Wicklow* said, the extract did not speak of the lower classes, but generally of manufacturers in large towns. Mr. Burke admitted, that they had a fair right to have their opinion fully considered on questions connected with commerce, manufactures, and trade, but he denied, that their knowledge of agriculture was such as ought to command deep attention.

Earl *Fitzwilliam* said, it was admitted, that those persons though not competent to speak on agricultural questions, were very good judges of commercial matters; now, he should be glad to know what was the question under discussion but a question of commerce.

Petition laid on the Table.

Lord *Brougham* said, that in bringing before their Lordships the motion relative to the Corn-laws, of which he had given notice, there was no necessity for him to occupy much of the time of the House. He should, therefore, simply submit his motion to their Lordships, wishing their Lordships to suppose, that all the arguments which he had urged last night were now reiterated. After the conflicting statements they had heard on the preceding evening—each argument and statement adduced on one side having been met by counter-arguments, and counter-statements on the other—he conceived it was proper that an inquiry should be instituted for the purpose of arriving at the real facts. He should, therefore, move, "That this House do immediately resolve itself into a Committee of the whole House to take into consideration the Act regulating the importation of foreign corn."

Viscount *Melbourne* said, he did not see in what had occurred in the course of the debate last night, anything that ought to induce their Lordships to alter the judgment they had then arrived at. He should, therefore, oppose the motion.

Lord *Brougham*: What had passed was, he thought, the strongest confirmation of his proposition, and exemplified the necessity of inquiry, inasmuch as no two noble Lords were agreed upon any one point connected with the subject.

Their Lordships divided:—Contents 7; Not contents 61: Majority 54.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Friday, March 15, 1839.

MINUTES.] Petitions presented. By Messrs. Willbraham, Eaton, Yorke, Bell, Benett, Rushbrooke, G. Palmer, Bagot, Pusey, and Hawkes, Lords G. Lennox, and G. Somerset, and Captain Paget, from a number of places, against the Repeal of the Corn-laws.—By Mr. Lowther, from York city, and Lord Dungannon, from Long Sutton, against any further Grant to Maynooth College.—By Mr. Eaton, from a place in Kent, against altering the Beer Laws.—By Captain Paget, Sir James Graham, and Lord Dungannon, from several places, against the Ecclesiastical Revenues Bill.—By Mr. Lowther, from York, against the Sale of Spirituous Liquors on the Lord's Day.—By Mr. Corry, from Strabane, for granting to Presbyterian Soldiers facilities to attend their own Churches.—By Messrs. Lockhart, and Hope Johnstone, and Sir G. Clerk, from Lanarkshire, Edinburgh, and Dumfries, for Church Extension in Scotland.—By Mr. Fox Maule, from Banff, against any further Grant to the Church of Scotland.—By Mr. O'Connell, from a number of places, for an Equality of Civil and Political Rights to Ireland.

Corn Laws—Adjourned Debate—(Fourth Night).—On the order of the day for resuming the debate on the Corn-laws,

Mr. *Hume* said, that although this was the fourth day of the present debate, he thought that too much time had not been occupied in the discussion of a question so important to the national interests. Among the questions which had long occupied his attention since he had been a Member of that House, that of a free trade in corn had been very prominent; and he had advocated not only a free trade in corn, but a free trade in every article of consumption. He had also advocated a reduction in the expenses of the country, corresponding with the natural change which took place at the conclusion of the war, and he had urged upon the House a return to the wholesome system which prevailed before the French war; and he had done this that the people might reap all the benefit of a return from a state of war to a state of peace. But the House had looked upon the question in a different point of view, and they had taken a different course and they had taken the most fatal step of all by passing the Corn-laws in 1815. If they had adopted that course which wisdom and policy pointed out, the landed proprietors. whose property had increased in value during the war, and whose rents had risen nearly double in amount, would have pursued a very different course. During the war, the profits of trade had been enormous, and the means of purchasing food had been doubled and trebled in price. In many cases, money was plentiful, and all persons seemed in prosperity. The only party that suffered was the public as a body, who were charged with the enormous debt. The Corn-laws had passed to limit the amount of food, and therefore it was that he always objected to them. What had been the result of the laws passed in 1815? Why, although those laws had been passed avowedly with the view of securing steadiness of price in corn, and under the pretence of protecting the farmers and labourers, their only effect had been to keep up high rents and benefit the landed proprietors. This had been called a labourer's question, but it was a measure which separated the community into two classes—the one benefited by the increased rent of land—the rest subsisting on what they derived from capital, from manufactures, from commerce. It was unjust, in as far as it taxed a large proportion of the people for the benefit of a few—it was unjust, in as far as it prevented the free application of capital to the means by which employment might be given in this country, and it thus tended to lessen the power of the State by diminishing the means of paying the taxes. If ever there was a question more easy of solution than any other it was this. While the interest of the debt had increased from nine millions and a half to thirty millions at the close of the war—instead of contriving means by which the industry of the country might make these taxes light to the bulk of the people they actually added, in the form of Corn-laws, an additional tax, equal to half the interest of the national debt. It was his object to show that he was not alone in the view which he had taken, but that every individual who was of eminence as a political economist, would be found to bear out this opinion, and which he had always endeavoured to explain to the House. For twenty years he had on various occasions brought this subject before the House. Now, greater distress existed at the present time than perhaps at any former period. Every object for which the present Corn-laws had been passed had failed, and the farmers and their labourers, whom it was intended to protect, had been injured by its operation. He was thoroughly impressed, then, with the conviction that this law committed great injustice—that it was injurious to all classes, commercial and agricultural—and that it had aggravated the evils which had existed in this country. What had been its result? Here they were, after twenty-five years of peace, with a population more wretched, and in greater distress in every part of the country, than at the period when the laws were enacted. He took upon himself, therefore, to say that the object which the authors of the measure had in view had entirely failed, and that it had brought those whom it pretended to favour and protect (the farmers and the labourers) to a state of misery and distress. Why, since this law had passed, the attention of the House had been more frequently devoted to the consideration of agricultural distress than to any other subject. There had been no less than six committees to inquire into agricultural distress. The first of these was in the year 1820, a few years after the passing of a bill which restricted all importation till the price was raised to 80*s.* free of charge, being, in fact, in the then state of Europe, an entire prohibition to importation. In that year there was "a select committee to whom the several petitions presented to the House upon the subject of agricultural distress were referred, to consider the matter thereof, and report their opinion thereon" and the report said, "the committee consider that whilst the difference is so great between the continental and the British price of corn as at present, the latter being on an average double the price of the former, every temptation exists to get in a large quantity of foreign corn, and then to shut the ports." In 1821 a report was made from "the select committee, to whom the several petitions which have been presented to the House in this Session of Parliament, complaining of the depressed state of the agriculture of the United Kingdom, were referred, to inquire into the allegations thereof, and to report their observations thereon." In 1822 there was a report from "the select committee appointed to inquire into the allegations of the several petitions which have been presented to the House in the last and present Session of Parliament, complaining of the distressed state of the agriculture of the United Kingdom, and to report their observations thereupon to the House." In 1833 there was a report from "the select committee appointed to inquire into the present state of agriculture, and of persons employed in agriculture in the United Kingdom, and to whom several petitions presented on the subject of agriculture to the House were referred;" and in 1836 there was a report from "the select committee appointed to inquire ino the state of agriculture and into the causes and extent of the distress which still presses upon some important branches thereof and who were empowered to report the minutes of the evidence taken before them from time to time to the House." But if he wished to give a correct estimate of the evils of the Corn-laws as affecting the manufacturing interests, he would select a passage from the report of the committee which sat in 1821; and here he must remark that there was one point connected with the report of that year which was particularly deserving of remark; it was the production of a committee composed almost entirely of agricultural gentlemen. In that report it was said:—

"This system is certainly liable to sudden alterations of which the effect must be at one time to reduce prices already low, lower than they would probably have been under a state of free trade, and at another, unnecessarily to enhance prices already high, to aggravate the evils of scarcity, and to render more severe the depression of prices from abundance. On the one hand it deceives the grower with a false hope of a monopoly, and, by its occasional interruption, may lead to consequences which deprive him of the benefits of that monopoly when most wanted; on the other hand, it holds out to the country the prospect of an occasional free trade, but so regulated and desultory as to baffle the calculations and unsettle the transactions both of the grower and the dealer at home; to deprive the consumer of most of the benefits of such a trade and to involve the merchant in more than the ordinary risks of mercantile speculation. It exposes the markets of the country either to be occasionally overwhelmed with an inundation of foreign corn altogether disproportionate to its wants; or, in the event of any considerable deficiency in our own harvest, it creates a sudden competition on the continent, by the effect of which the prices are rapidly and unnecessarily raised against ourselves. But the inconvenient operation of the present Corn-law, which appears to be less the consequence of the quantity of foreign grain brought into this country, upon an average of years, than of the manner in which that grain is introduced, is not confined to great fluctuations in price, and consequent embarrassment both to the grower and consumer; for the occasional prohibition of import has also a direct tendency to contract the extent of our commercial dealings with other states, and to excite in the rulers of those states a spirit of permanent exclusion against the productions or manufactures of this country and its colonies."

He had also the authority of the landlords for another most important admission:—

"When your committee," they said, "find, for instance, in the seventeen months which passed between January, 1816, and June, 1817, the price of wheat varying from 53*s.* 1*d.* to 112*s.* 7*d.* or 111*s.* per quarter; and again, in the three months which ensued from June to September, 1817, from 112*s.* 7*d.* to 74*s.* or 51*s.* per quarter; they cannot but ask whether fluctuations so rapid and extensive have existed in any other community of universal supply and demand, or in any other country?

and whether these fluctuations may not have been aggravated by some of the effects of the present law?"

It might be said that those who had always argued against these laws might not be entitled on this point to much attention, but the statements which he had just read were made by those who were interested in maintaining opposite views. He affirmed, however, that the variation in the price of corn which these gentlemen admitted had taken place solely in consequence of the Corn-laws; the variations of price in countries of the Continent, where there were no such laws, as was the case in Holland till within the last few years, during an entire century, had been less than in our own country. In Holland, during 100 years, there had never been a variation of more than 40 per cent., and this was owing to peculiarly sterile or productive seasons, and excluding them, the variation had not been more than 15 per cent. In England, too, when we had no Corn-laws, from 1773 to 1793, during a period of twenty years, the variation had been very small compared with what had since taken place. It had not been more than 56 per cent., whilst since it had reached 113 per cent. He, therefore, contended that the great fluctuations which had since taken place were entirely owing to the Corn-laws. The right hon. Baronet, the Member for Pembroke, quoted the calculations made by the committee of 1833, showing the great fluctuation in price from 1793 to 1814; but every one knew well that during that period the supply from abroad was limited by the interference of war and by the state of continental Europe. He held in his hand the extract which had been referred to by the right hon. Member for Pembroke of the variations during that period, but they were not much greater than the fluctuations which had been introduced by the new Corn-law. By that table it appeared that from 1817 to 1821 the variation had been 143 per cent. On the 28th of June, 1817, which was the highest price, the price reached 112*s.* 7*d.*; and on the 29th of December, 1821, which was the lowest, the price was only 46*s.* 2*d.* If they took the next five years they would find that the variation was 81 per cent.; but in the two years, 1827 and 1828, immediately preceding the alteration in the law, the variation was but 24 per cent. In short, although the greatest variation for the twenty years preceding 1793 only showed a variation of 56 per cent., the variation in the years from 1815 to 1821, had been as high as 111 per cent.; and the variation during the last ten years, from 1828 to 1838, had reached 113¼ per cent. He had also a statement of the comparative averages of the price of corn in England and in France, from 1819 to 1838, and he found that the average difference between the price in the two countries was from 43 to 44 per cent. In many places the difference was 100 per cent., and in others 80 per cent., but the average difference was from 43 to 44 per cent. These, then, were the evils of the present laws, and he would now explain how the evils were to be remedied. After the reports of the committees to which he had referred, and which had sat in different years, from 1820 down to the present time, and after the documents which he had read had so distinctly shown what great variations and fluctuations had taken place, he could not see how hon. Gentlemen could persist in saying that a steady price had been kept up. And what effect had the law had on the interests of the farmers? They had been reduced by that very law to ruin and to beggary, which had caused in 1820, and in five subsequent years, committees to be appointed to take into consideration the distress of the agriculturists. And having produced this effect upon the farmers how had it affected the interests of the great body of the community? He thought it but justice to state, that this protective system first began with the manufacturers, and Adam Smith had expressed his opinion as to the short sighted policy of this system, and it would be well, perhaps, if hon. Gentlemen would hear what was said by him upon this part of the subject:—

> "In every country," said Adam Smith "it always is, and must be, the interest of the great body of the people to buy whatever they want of those who sell it cheapest. The proposition is so very manifest, that it seems ridiculous to take any pains to prove it; nor could it ever have been called in question had not the interested sophistry of merchants and manufacturers, confounded the common sense of mankind. Their interest, is in this respect, directly opposite to that of the great body of the people."

And what Adam Smith had said on the subject of manufactures, he would apply to the landed interests who had tried to follow the example set to them by the manufacturers; they had endeavoured to gain the profit like the manufacturers by the same system, but they entirely failed. Many of the effects produced by these restricting laws had been referred to. The noble Lord, the Member for Stroud, had stated one or two instances last night; and he would state another, which appeared to him to bear on this subject, with a view to showing, that the present system was injurious to the landed interest. It was a paragraph in the writings of the gentleman whom he had already quoted, and which was well worthy of the attention of the hon. Gentlemen opposite, as showing that it was impossible to increase the prosperity of the landed interest by maintaining restrictions on other classes. It appeared, that the proprietors of vineyards in France, procured an Order in Council in 1731, to prevent the planting of new vineyards, under pretence of its occasioning a scarcity of corn. On this Adam Smith said;—

"Nowhere in France is corn more carefully cultivated than in the wine provinces. The numerous hands employed in the one species of cultivation necessarily encourage the other, by affording a ready market for its produce. To diminish the number of those capable of paying for it is surely a most unpromising expedient for encouraging the cultivation of corn. It is like the policy which would promote agriculture by discouraging manufactures."

And Adam Smith added;—

"It is not more than fifty years ago, that some of the counties in the neighbourhood of London had petitioned Parliament against the extension of turnpike roads into the remoter counties. Those remoter counties, they pretended, from the cheapness of labour, would be able to sell their grass and corn cheaper in the London market than themselves, and would thereby ruin their cultivation. Their rents, however, have risen, and their cultivation has been improved since that time."

This was in illustration of the mistakes which people of narrow views, often fall into, even as to their own interests. The result showed, that all classes profit by the liberal system, which promotes the general prosperity. He held, that the Corn-laws lessened the general prosperity, and that they fettered the industry of the country. Every page of our history showed, that by these laws the general prosperity of the country was injured, that labour, and capital, and industry, could no longer obtain fair returns, and that we were now in a situation less able to encounter the difficulties which weighed on the country than if this law had not been passed. The House, however, had a right to know who were now the applicants to them for this change. He had been sorry to hear the epithets applied to the different parties engaged in this controversy. The manufacturers were not actuated by any more selfish views than the community at large, but, seeing the injury which this system inflicted on the country, while they felt it fall with great weight on themselves, they were anxious to procure redress, they did press for changes, and they came before the House with perfectly clean hands, for, at a meeting of the Corn-law delegates from the different parts of England, on the 5th of February last, they came to the following resolution unanimously:—

"That this meeting, whilst it demands of the Legislature as an act of justice, the total and immediate repeal of all laws imposing duties upon, or restricting the importation of corn, and other articles of subsistence, is prepared to resign all claim to protection on home manufactures, and to carry out, in their fullest extent, both as affects agriculture and manufactures, the true and peaceful principles of free trade, by removing all existing obstacles to the unrestricted interchange of industry and capital between all nations."

He (Mr. Hume) was against restrictions upon any article, and, more especially, upon an article of such vast importance as corn. He thought, that from the passing of the law in 1815 they might date the misery and wretchedness of the hand-loom weavers, for the industry of that class had been so undersold in other places that it was impossible for them to meet the competition of other countries. On this subject he was supported by the authority of an author of great merit, who had explained many of the difficulties which existed in the case. Mr. Senior said:—

"The principal means by which the fund for the maintenance of labourers can be increased, is by increasing the productiveness of labour. And this may be done, first, by allowing every man to exert himself in the way, which, from experience, he finds most beneficial, by freeing industry from the mass of restrictions, prohibitions, and protecting duties, with which the Legislature, sometimes in well-meaning ignorance, sometimes in pity, and sometimes in national jealousy, has laboured to crush or misdirect her efforts."

He repeated, that he had always opposed the prohibitory duties; and he held in his hand a list of the prohibitions on different manufactures, of many of which he had advised the Government to clear the statute book. Many of them were merely nominal but, at the same time, many of the duties extended to an amount varying from 5 to 30 per cent. From the time of the passing of the present Corn-law, in 1815, misery and wretchedness had been produced to those who were dependent upon manual labour for their support, and it would eventually become impossible for them to bear up under the competition and pressure. All attempts to relieve them and give them continued prosperity would be useless, unless the Legislature went to the root of the evil which now weighed them to the earth. England was blessed with abundance of capital, greater in amount, probably, than that of any other country, and yet, by the Corn-laws, that capital was prevented from being usefully applied, and poverty and misery were the consequences. Capital, it had been said, was fluctuating, and might pass away, and that very capital which would tend to make Ireland happy, and to employ the manufacturing population of England, was now passing away to foreign countries. There was one aspect under which this question had not been considered. Hon. Gentlemen had spoken again and again of the necessity of employing the agricultural labourer, but they had not taken into account the immense increase of the population of the country—an increase which had occurred almost entirely in the manufacturing districts, but during the progress of which no means had been adopted to supply the wants of those who had new claims upon the community, and they had, in consequence, been compelled to quit the country by emigration, while the greatest benefits might have been derived from the employment of their labour, which could have been effected by means of the capital which existed. He had taken a statement from the returns which had been made, and which would show the gradual increase which he had described. He would not go back to the year 1700, but he would date the inquiry from a later period. In 1790, there was a population of 8,540,000; in 1810, it was increased to 10,407,000; in 1830, the amount of the population was 13,840,000, and it was at the present time calculated to be about sixteen millions; but from the year 1790 to 1830, a period of forty years, there appeared to be an increased population equal to 5,300,000. He begged to ask hon. Gentlemen how they considered these 5,300,000 persons to have been employed? In agriculture? No; for the number so employed was not greater at the present day than it had been in 1790. He found, by an official return, that in 1811, out of every 100 of the population of England there were 35 employed in agriculture; in 1821, there were 33; and in 1831, there were 28. So that the restriction laid on by the Corn-laws, instead of providing for the employment of the agricultural labourers, had actually lessened the number employed. In Scotland manual labour was as much as possible substituted by machinery. Where had the increased population of England been employed? In manufactures. So that, while stinting and limiting the power of employing manufacturers, the advocates of the Corn-laws were limiting and stinting the supply of food. He recommended, that the doors to industry should be opened — that food should be rendered cheap—and thus the people would be happy, instead of starved, as they had hitherto been by these laws. For the present detestable monopoly gave to the few—to the rich—the power of starving millions. ["*Oh, oh!*"] That was strong language. But it was only giving things their right names. And it was surprising to him (Mr. Hume) that those religious Gentlemen, who were so acutely sensible on the subject of the factory children, were not equally so on the question of the Corn-laws. There could be no doubt of the increase in the population, for he had in his hand a paper showing a comparison of the years 1801, 1811, 1821, and 1831, in the manufacturing and agricultural districts, and it appeared from that, that the increase of the population had, in the former districts, been very great, while, in the latter, it had been very small. To take the case of Manchester and Salford (for he would not refer to the metropolis); in that large manufacturing district, he found that the population in 1801 was 90,399; while, in 1822, it was 110,244, an increase of 22 per cent.; in 1827, it was 154,807, an increase of 40 per cent.; and, in 1831, it was 227,808, an increase of 47 per cent. In Glasgow, in 1801, it was 77,385; in 1811, it was 100,749; in 1821, it was 147,043; and, in 1831, it was 202,426. In Birmingham the numbers were respectively 73,670, 85,753, 106,721, and 142,206. In Leeds they were 53,162, 62,534, 83,796, and 123,393. In Nottingham they were 28,861, 34,253 40,415, and 50,680. In Liverpool the amount of the population rose from 79,722 to 189,242; in Bristol, from 63,645 to 103,886; in Newcastle, from 36,963 to 57,937; in

Dundee, from 26,084 to 45,355; and in Plymouth, from 43,194 to 75,534. In the counties the increase had been equally great. The population of Chester had risen from 191,751 to 334,391; that of Durham, from 160,361 to 253,910; that of Lancaster from 672,731 to 1,336,854; of Monmouth, from 45,582 to 98,130; of Surrey, from 269,043 to 486,334; of Warwick from 208,190 to 336,610; and of York, from 565,282 to 976,350; while the population of Flint, in Wales, had also risen from 39,622 to 60,012. But what was the increase in the agricultural districts? He would take the county of Buckingham. In Buckinghamshire the population had been 107,444 in the year 1801, and in 1811, it was 117,650, a rise to the extent of nine per cent. In Hereford the rise was five per cent., in Huntingdon four per cent., in Rutland none at all, in Salop sixteen, and in Wilts five. In 1831, the increase per cent. was in Bucks nine, in Hereford seven, in Huntingdon nine, in Rutland five, in Salop eight, and in Wilts eight. To return, then, to the manufacturing districts. The proportion per cent. of the increase had been—in Glasgow 114, in Liverpool 110, in Manchester 109, in Birmingham 73, in Leeds 99, in Paisley 68, in Aberdeen 85, and in Dundee 64. When they saw, then, that the population actually employed in agriculture was less than it was thirty years ago, he begged to inquire where were the means to be found by which the surplus population was to be supported? During the whole of that time it had been maintained by manufactures, and it should, at least, be the business of the Government, and of that House, not to limit the means by which the mouths of the increasing population could be filled; on the contrary, the Legislature should provide for them by opening, by every means in its power, those channels by which they might receive supplies. Taking the whole of the labouring population of the country, he was prepared to express his belief, that not one-third of them were sufficiently fed. The amount of the produce of the land was limited, that of manufactures was unlimited, but if the means of living could be obtained, means of employment would also be given; and while fresh occupation was furnished to some, that which was already in existence would not be taken away from others. It was nothing but want of capital and of hands which could limit manufactures, both of which England possessed, and if means of living were introduced, might be employed; for he was prepared to say, that a bushel of corn could not be imported which would not be paid for by the labour of manufacturers put into operation by its consumption. The hon. Member for Yorkshire had stated, that this country was too highly taxed to enter into competition with foreign countries. But he would remind them, that if this country were surrounded by a wall of brass, we should still have the interest of the National Debt to pay out of our own means—that is, if we were honest enough—and, he must say, that it was only the landed interest he found who were inclined to meddle with the national faith entered into by the country with its creditors, always excepting the hon. Member for Birmingham. In 1836, the amount of exports was 77,932,676*l.*, in 1837, it was 84,883,276*l.*, and, in 1838, it was 62,317,207*l.*; and it was only by means of her trade and manufactures, that England could hold the high position which it maintained. Supposing, then, that forty-two millions were paid annually in wages, which he calculated to be the amount, every guinea of that sum brought to the revenue a return of from 5*s.* to 7*s.* as duty upon articles of consumption, such as tea, tobacco, spirits, beer, &c. By this means, and by the export of goods, the burden upon the people was made lighter: and if, by the introduction of foreign corn, the amount of employment were also increased, there would be an increase in the amount both of wages and profit; additional means of meeting the demands upon the Exchequer, in order to pay the debt, would, of course, be furnished. He, therefore, maintained, that by opening the ports of England, and creating a free trade in corn, as well as in every other article the trade in which was now impeded or prohibited, the produce of the taxes would be increased, and some of those which now bore so heavily upon the country might be repealed. The labouring population of England was, at present, more miserable and worse paid than that of any other country in Europe; and, since the measure of 1815 had acquired any influence, the wages of the English labourer had been decreasing, while that of his continental neighbour had been increasing. On referring to the important paper read last night by the hon. Member for Sheffield, he found, that the English labourer was worse off than those of any other country in Europe; in fact, while the latter had had their wages advancing since 1815, the wages of the English labourer had been diminishing under the baneful influence of that period. He deeply regretted, that Ministers should make this a divided question. Her Majesty's Secretary at War, the Secretary for the Home Department, and the President of the Board of Trade, had stated, that this question was one of the utmost importance to the interests of this country, and yet when they were in the Cabinet they and their colleagues could not agree to it. Elsewhere a distinguished member of her Majesty's Government, who had a very great influence over the country, and who also had very great influence at Court—that distinguished personage had the night before said, as the reports in the morning papers showed,—"I declare, before God, that this is the wildest and the maddest scheme that ever the imagination of men conceived—that is, to leave the agricultural interest without protection." Now he had hitherto thought, that the wisest and most discreet men had been selected to carry on the affairs of Government, but the conclusion, from what that high personage had said was, that his colleagues were absolutely worse than madmen. He could come to no other conclusion. He (Mr. Hume) regretted very much that he could not now produce the evidence that had been taken three years before by the Commissioners for inquiring into the state of the hand-loom weavers, as that evidence would have supported all his opinions; the returns of death would show, that while the Legislature had the power, it had not the will to relieve, and that thousands and tens of thousands had died of famine. The Corn-laws were killing the hand-loom weavers by inches; it could be proved, that when food was scarce and employment scanty, the deaths amongst the populations had been two to one compared to the deaths in times when food and employment abounded. It was very fine, indeed, to talk of our bold peasantry. Why where were they now? There was no agriculturist now better than a pauper. [*Laughter.*] Since hon. Gentlemen doubted, he would prove it. He was a member of the Committee up stairs last year. They first proceeded to inquire about Sussex. On the 19th of April, 1837, several labourers were examined before the Committee. They had all wives and numerous children, and stated, that their wages were, some of them 8*s*., some of them 8*s*. 6*d*., some of them 7*s*., and one of them 11*s*. 6*d*. a week. They stated before the Committee how they distributed this income, by which they supported themselves, and in all instances, the amount for bread was two-thirds of the whole income. Not believing it possible that people could remain under such a state of things, he himself visited Wiltshire and Devonshire very often after that, and found the average wages there to be 8*s*. a week. Some received 9*s*., others 7*s*., and the average was 8*s*. The corn was then at 56*s*. It had since been 70*s*. and 80*s*.; and he would ask, what increase of wages had there been to the labourer, to enable him to procure the same proportion of bread for his family that he had been able to procure when the corn was at 56*s*. It had, indeed, been said, that wages had been advanced 2*s*. 6*d*., but he could assure the House, that that was only in the Northern districts. And this was the state of the bold peasantry of England. It was an insult to talk of such a thing. There was no such thing in existence; and he hoped he should hear no more of our bold peasantry, because, if a peasantry, in the very next grade of that to actual starvation, was a bold peasantry, why then, and then only, was ours a bold peasantry. They were unable to procure the necessary comforts of life. They actually stated before the Committee, that they never tasted any animal food from January to December, and they were absolutely without the means of procuring necessary clothing. Surely the House, under such circumstances was called upon to consider why such a state of things existed. For his own part, he believed, it to be on account of the Corn-laws, and that, therefore, there ought to be a change in them. The manufacturers of this country asserted, that, by our restrictions, corn in every other part was kept fifty per cent. below the price at which it was in England, and that the consequence of that was, that the manufacturers could not produce articles which chiefly required manual labour, at a rate to enable them to compete with foreign markets. In reference to Ireland, was the peasantry there better off now than they were in 1815? Why, it was clear that the system had been a fleecing system ever since that period. There was no possible way of improving Ireland, but by taking money there, and encouraging manufacturing in that country with it; but so long as Ireland was merely enabled to produce the raw produce, so long would it remain as the Poles were, in poverty and wretchedness. The remedy for their state was to give employment. What were they to do to give employment? Why, he would say, introduce manufactures into Ireland; and if it were asked where would they sell them, his answer was, that the wide world would be the market for them. If he wanted any further proof of the decay in the condition of the people generally, he found it in the fact, that there had been a decrease in the production of goods requiring manual labour, and an increase in those requiring machinery. Yet, with all these evils pressing upon them, the workmen were so blind to their own interests as to be at the present time engaged in agitation for the attainment of abstract rights—(rights from which he was not averse, and which he hoped they would, ultimately, succeed in attaining)—instead of endeavouring to obtain a repeal of the Corn-laws, from which most of the practical evils under which they laboured arose. Fourteen or fifteen hours a day they were obliged to labour for the mere means of subsistence which would have been thought excessive, could the possibility of it have been contemplated at all, in former times. It was supposed, that the opening the ports to foreign corn would so seriously lower the price of corn as to injure the landlords. But one effect would be to raise the price of corn in other parts of the world so as to bring the prices as nearly as possible to a level—the expenses of conveyance of course excepted. Again, the supporters of the Corn-laws argued, that they were rendered necessary by the burdens on land in England. He was prepared to maintain, that England was the most lightly taxed of all the corn-growing countries of Europe. In France, M. Humann, the Minister of Finance, stated, on the 29th of April, 1833, that the total revenue of France for that year was 1,000,244,000 francs, of which the agriculturist paid 400,000,000, or forty per cent. of the whole revenue; and, in answer to a complaint made in the Chamber of Deputies, that the agricultural interest was unduly favoured by the Corn-laws,

> "He strongly combated the opinion of the landed interest being unduly protected, maintaining, that the direct taxes paid by the landed proprietors in France amounted to 400,000,000 francs, or one-fourth of their net income, independent of their proportion of indirect taxes. In Belgium, the direct taxes were, in the same year, 32,500,000 francs, of which 21,631,614 were taxes on land, amounting to one-fourth of the whole public revenue of 83,000,000 francs."

He, therefore, denied altogether that land was here so heavily taxed in proportion as land in other countries. On the contrary, every thing had been done that possibly could be done to relieve the agriculture of this country from taxation. The landed interest, in fact, had received the exclusive protection of the Legislature. The right hon. Baronet, the Member for Pembroke, had designated the landed interest as all-powerful. If they were powerful, let them also be just. He confessed, however, he despaired of justice from them, more especially when he saw that in another place only 24 out of 224 were found to advocate a change in the Corn-laws, and that the majority refused even to go into committee on the question. Much was said about the employment of physical force, and of the evils which the State must suffer whenever the lawful authority of the Legislature was set at nought. But who were they who gave rise to such demonstrations of physical force, or occasion to use them? Those who committed the flagrant injustice on the people, refusing to repeal a law destructive to their happiness and welfare, and even refusing to inquire into its operation on the community. With all the evils produced by the Corn-laws—with the poverty, and starvation, and misery which our population suffered—he was justified in calling, on behalf of the community, for justice from the landlords. He contended, that wages would not be reduced by the repeal of the Corn-laws, and he begged to quote to the House on the point, a passage from a letter of Colonel Torrens to the Duke of Buckingham. The hon. Member read the following passage:—

> "What is the counteracting circumstance which takes from the operative classes of England the power of obtaining an increase of wages, within the limits of the great superiority in the efficacy of their labour, arising from the extraordinary advantages, natural and acquired, which they possess? This circumstance is the high price of food; and the cause of the high price of food is the existing Corn-laws. So long as the existing Corn-laws remain, so long will it be found impracticable either to diminish the hours of labour or to increase wages, and so long will every attempt to do either, inflict additional privation upon the working classes, by narrowing the foreign market and contracting trade. No measures for increasing the reward of labour can be successful until the Corn-laws have been first abolished. Were food as cheap in England

as it is in other manufacturing countries, it would be practicable to secure to the operative classes in England a higher rate of real wages within the limit of the superiority, which more efficacious labour, cheaper fuel and carriage, and better machinery, all contribute to confer upon England in producing goods for the foreign market. But while the value of food in England is artificially raised above its value in those other manufacturing countries which are our competitors in the foreign market, such an improvement in the rate of real wages is morally impossible. Until an alteration in the Corn-laws shall have secured us against foreign competition, all projects for raising wages will be found erroneous in principle, and ruinous in practice. No plan for improving the condition of the people can, by possibility, be effectual, unless it increases the quantity of work which can be executed in a day or year, or the comparative cheapness of machinery, fuel, and carriage, or diminishes the comparative dearness of food. All projects for increasing wages, or for diminishing the hours of labour, which do not contain efficient provisions for accomplishing one or more of those objects, are founded in ignorance and in delusion, and must terminate in disappointment and in aggravated distress. The first step towards improvement must be the abolition of the Corn-laws."

Formerly, continued the hon. Member, he had been the advocate of a fixed duty. He had since seen reason to alter his opinion, and was now for total repeal, not merely of the duties on foreign corn, but also on every other article of import. Let the operations of capital be free in all branches of commerce alike—let there be a free employment of capital in commerce and manufactures, upon an equal footing as regarded freedom from restriction, and he did not depair of yet seeing England rise superior to all her difficulties.

Colonel *Wood* said, the debate had been protracted to such an extraordinary length, that he would not have ventured to obtrude himself on the notice of the House for the mere purpose of answering the observations of his hon. Friend, if he might be permitted so to call the hon. Member for Kilkenny; but the right hon. President of the Board of Trade, and the noble Lord, the Secretary at War, in his three hours' speech, had cast so many taunts upon the country Gentlemen on his side of the House, that he must request the indulgence of the House whilst he stated his reasons for thinking, not only that the present law was defensible, but also that it was the very best which could be possibly produced. They had stated that the present law had failed, because it had not prevented great fluctuations in prices, and had read part of the speech delivered by Mr. Canning in 1827, to shew that when he framed it he had said that prices would range between 55*s.* and 65*s.* a-quarter. The right hon. President of the Board of Trade had read returns to show that since the passing of that law the prices had ranged in one week from 47*s.* to 77*s.* a-quarter. He could not believe that those returns were correct, and in a conversation which he had had with the right hon. Gentleman as they left the House, the right hon. Gentleman told him that the returns which he had quoted were the returns of the price of corn every week, and not the returns of the average price of six weeks, which, as everybody knew, regulated the duty. He must, however, remind the House that not even the six weeks' average price was taken as a datum in the calculations for arrangements between landlord and tenant. If the operation of the Act of 1828 were looked at, every gentleman connected with agriculture would perceive at once that since the period of its passing, prices had been more steady than they were ever known to be before. The average price of the last ten years was 56*s.*, and that was of itself a proof that the Act of 1828 was a great improvement on the Act of 1815. The Act of 1815 he admitted had turned out a great failure, and had inflicted, as the hon. Member for Kilkenny had said, extreme misery and distress upon all classes of the community. The system established in 1815 had been altered in 1822, and again in 1827. Formerly no importation was allowed till the home price reached 80*s.* a-quarter, but now wheat might be imported when the price was 73*s.*, on paying a duty of 1*s.* He contended that a graduated scale of duty was a very great improvement on every other system adopted for the last 200 years. It was of very great importance, not only to the agriculturists, but to the whole population, that the country should be able to produce a quantity of corn sufficient for the whole consumption of its inhabitants. It was fully proved by a calculation in Mr. Marshall's tables, that, taking the number of acres brought under cultivation annually in Great Britain by the four-course system of agriculture to be 5,000,000, and the produce of each to be twenty-two bushels, the quantity of corn would be sufficient not only to supply the whole consumption, but leave a surplus of 3,000,775 quarters for next year's supply. The feelings of the agricultural population he knew were decidedly unfavourable to any alteration in the present Corn-laws. At a meeting of the county which he had the honour to represent, a series of resolutions were carried against any alteration, although amendments were moved proposing a fixed duty. A petition was in consequence prepared for presentation to that House, deprecating any change of the existing system, which was signed by the Lord-lieutenant, by gentlemen, farmers, yeomen, shopkeepers, and labourers. The agriculturists knew very well, that under the existing system they had been for some years gradually rising from a state of difficulty and distress to one of comparative ease and comfort. It was an error to suppose that the working classes would have a greater plenty of food, if its price were reduced. Wages invariably followed the price of food, and cheap bread meant low wages. If the manufacturers of this country wished to compete with those of the Continent, they must learn to live on the same food as those of the Continent. He hoped, however, that such a state of things would never have any existence in this country. He would read to the House Mr. Jacob's description of the manner in which the population of the continental states lived. He said, "From the time I left the Netherlands, through Prussia, Poland, Austria, Bavaria, and Wurtemberg, to the time I entered France, I never saw either in the baker's shop, hotels, or private houses, a loaf of wheaten bread. In large towns a small loaf of wheaten bread is to be obtained, but only at the tables where foreigners were seated. In the villages and small towns rye bread is gegenerally used. Travellers commonly carry with them, in their carriages, a sufficiency of bread to serve them from one large town to another." He (Colonel Wood) hoped that the people of this country would never be reduced to live on such diet; he trusted that at one o'clock every day the labourer would always have a loaf of bread and a slice of bacon to set before his family. [Mr. *T. Attwood.*—And a pot of beer.] He joined in the wish. He hoped also that the day would soon come when the people of Ireland would exchange their potato diet for wholesome wheaten bread. A total repeal of importation duties was what he believed few would advocate, but many Gentlemen were in favour of a fixed duty. But could any man suppose that a fixed duty could have been collected during last September and November? Had there been a fixed duty then in existence, either Parliament must have met to repeal it, or Her Majesty's Ministers must have issued Orders in Council suspending the operation of the law. Now, he was strongly of opinion that the manufacturing interest would not like to see such a power vested in the hands of any Minister of the Crown. Mr. Jacob and Mr. Canning were both adverse to the plan of a fixed duty. Mr. Canning said no description of duty could give ample protection except one that yielded to the fluctuations of prices and supply. He thought, in spite of the agitation which the President of the Board of Trade had sanctioned, that a conflict between the classes on this subject would never arrive. God Almighty avert so great a calamity; but if ever the country were assailed from without, he was well assured that the landlords, farmers, yeomanry, and labourers, would unite in defence of the rights which they had so long enjoyed, with the purpose of transmitting them unimpaired to their posterity.

Mr. *M. Philips* commenced by saying, that a noble Earl (the Earl of Darlington), who had addressed the House on Wednesday evening, had thrown out, as was reported, a most serious charge against a portion of his (Mr. M. Philips's) constituents, for he was reported to have said—"It appeared to him that the Chamber of Commerce of Manchester had resorted to most unjustifiable means for getting up an agitation on this question. They had endeavoured to foment discontent in every part of the country, and had almost gone to the extent of seeking to arouse the populace to arms." Now, on the part of the Chamber of Commerce of Manchester he must give the most unqualified denial to this statement; and he had no doubt that the noble Lord, whose absence he regretted, would be ready to retract or explain the words. He had no doubt of this, since nothing could be further from the fact than such an assertion. In adverting to the various arguments which had been brought forward on this subject, it appeared to him that a great mistake was made by many Gentlemen who advocated the cause of the landlords, in inferring that the advocates of repeal were desirous of reducing the country to depend on foreign corn wholly and exclusively. No such thing was, in fact, intended by any one; the manufacturers were too much attached to the home trade to wish anything of the sort, and it would be very odd if they did not prefer the trade at their doors to that which was carried on with foreigners. The hon. Member for the North Riding of Yorkshire (Mr. Cayley) had said, that the agriculturists were always exceedingly loth to reduce wages; but it should be remembered that if the agriculturist did not choose to reduce wages, he had the option of doing something else; if he did not reduce wages, he might discharge his labourers, and send them on the parish. In manufactures, however, where the machinery was fixed, it was not possible to discharge the labourers without also stopping the machinery; and the hon. Member, in stating that the manufacturer felt no concern for his labourer, while the agriculturist did, was not borne out by the facts. Again, when the hon. Member argued that the laws ought not to be altered, in consideration of the amount of capital which had been invested in land under these laws, it ought to be remembered that the capital was invested with the full knowledge of the liability of these laws to alteration. The hon. Member might as well say, that the present population having grown up under the existing laws of every kind, we had no right to alter any of them, or that we had no right to abolish any of those old monopolies under which the country had so long groaned. The hon. Member had stated, that the average return of wheat, oats, barley, and rye, was four to one in Prussia, while in Britain the average was eight to one. Why thus, by the hon. Member's own showing, the English agriculturist had a protection to the amount of 100*l.* per cent. as compared to the Prussian. The hon. Member had argued, that the repeal would cause an increased demand for bullion for exportation. Now, he (Mr. Philips) had always imagined that it had been owing to the contracted nature of our dealings with foreigners, that the necessity had arisen of exporting bullion at a time when its presence here was extremely desirable. The hon. Member's statement was, he believed, quite unsupported by facts. The hon. Member had said, that there were but 355,000 persons connected with trade in factories, that these were the loudest in crying out for repeal, and that it would be folly for the majority to give way to the demands of so small a minority. Now, he (Mr. M. Philips) said, that there were 2,386 mill-owners alone, and, not to particularize the various denominations of bleachers, sizers, calico printers, calico engravers, and others, whom indeed it would be impossible to enumerate, he said, that the number of those who were dependent on cotton, if taken at 1,500,000, would not be overstated. It was said, that the foreign potentates would take advantage of our wants when corn became scarce under the abolition in this country, and would impose duties upon the export of corn out of their dominions. Now, he should think, if foreign potentates chose to do what was evidently so impolitic, they undoubtedly might do so, for many of the foreign potentates were very despotic; but the way to prevent this would be very easy, and would consist merely in entering into sounder commercial relations with them. The argument, here, too, had been as if the manufacturing interest wanted to depend upon foreigners for the whole supply. That balance of the supply which they were now obliged occasionally to get from the foreigner, at a great disadvantage, was all they asked. But on this point he would refer to the very able pamphlet of Mr. Porter, of the Board of Trade, who showed that the lower classes were much more dependent upon America for cotton for clothing than they could ever be on foreign countries for bread. But the United States would never have the folly to put a stop to their trade in cotton with us. He believed that the exact state of our relations with the United states was this—that out of 1,000,000 bags of cotton which we imported annually, 800,000 were imported from different parts of the Union, and yet there never was any inconvenience felt from this; and he believed that the southern states would rather separate from the Union altogether than give up the English trade in cotton. In reverting to the speech of the Member for the North Riding of Yorkshire, the hon. Member had stated that the success of Switzerland as a manufacturing country had nothing to do with the operation of those laws. Now, they who represented the manufacturing interest in that House entertained a diametrically opposite opinion. He had stated on a former occasion that Switzerland was a country which had no Corn-law, and it exported two-thirds of its manufactures, and successfully competed with the English manufactures in the market of the United States. That was ground which some few years ago was considered to be occupied by us alone, and now the Swiss were fast supplanting us. Then with respect to China, had we the exclusive supplying of the Chinese market with manufactured goods? No such thing. He had stated the other night, that in 1834, he knew it was a fact, that there had been 166,000 pieces of cotton goods imported into China, the produce of American looms, instead of being the produce of English looms. If that trade continued to grow as it had done heretofore, our trade with China would decline. An hon. Member had stated, that purchasers were returning to the English market for hosiery, because they found the hosiery of Nottingham of a better description than Saxon hosiery. That might be true, and, if it were so, he was glad to find, that the distressed labourers of Nottingham were about to find some relief. But that relief would not be of a permanent character, for the Saxon manufacturers could meet us in the foreign markets, and afford their goods at twenty-five per cent. less than we could, and therefore there was great room for their improvement, and the Saxon manufacturers would meet us again with an improved species of hosiery. The hon. Member for Lincolnshire had stated, that the manufacturers of this country were men of a sordid description, who cared little for the interests of those they employed. He thought that was a harsh statement for any hon. Member to make. There was another observation made by the hon. Member which he hoped the hon. Member would excuse him for adverting to. The hon. Member was addressing a number of the landed gentry of his own county, assembled at a public meeting, and he then had stated, that inasmuch as the manufactures of this country had flourished between the time of the passing of the Corn-law in 1815 and 1820, it must have been the result of the Corn-laws, that they did so flourish. He must say, that if the manufacturers of this country did flourish during that period, it was rather in spite of those laws than owing to them. There was no more connexion between the prosperity of the manufactures and the Corn-laws, than there was in the old and foolish saying, that Tenterden church steeple was the cause of the Goodwin sands. It had been stated, that none of the trades petitioned against the corn bill, but that the only petitions sent to that House against it originated with the manufacturers. He had had the honour of presenting petitions from every trade in the borough which he represented, respecting the operation of those laws, stating, that they viewed them as affecting their interests, and they prayed for their repeal. It had been stated, that the operatives had not petitioned against the bill; he would ask if the operative portion of the country was the most likely to prepare for meeting the contingencies for which it was now necessary to provide, or whether the party who paid the operatives their wages was not more likely to do that. He should have been extremely surprised if the manufacturers of this country had not been the first to address that House, and make known their fears of the operation of these laws, if they were suffered to continue. Would the noble Lord who had stated this permit him to ask whether they had been used to see the petitions of the agricultural labourers the first to be sent in in agricultural distress—whether they had seen that even the farmers themselves were the first to petition, but whether on the contrary, the landowners themselves had not been the first? It appeared to him, therefore, that there was no argument in that statement of the noble Lord. He was perfectly prepared to assert, that there was a deep and intense feeling with respect to the operation of those laws. He had had statements made to him showing him the list of prices in the month of February last year, when Parliament met, and in the month of February during the present year, and he found, that there had been a most extraordinary rise, most detrimental to the unfortunate operatives. The price of food had been in many instances nearly doubled; for he found, that in the month of January, 1838, flour was selling at 1*s.* 8*d.*, and in the same month in 1839, it was selling at 2*s.* and 2*s.* 9*d.* Potatoes had also risen in the same ratio. It did not lie in the power of the manufacturers to give an advance in their wages equivalent to this advance in the price of food. He confessed he was somewhat at a loss to discover what were the peculiar burdens of which the landed interest complained. He would ask this question—had they not the making of those laws? Did the manufacturers make them? Had they a voice in the making of those laws? He said most decidedly they had not. Neither Birmingham, nor Manchester, nor Sheffield, nor Leeds, had one word in the making of those laws; they were made exclusively by the representatives of the landed interest. If, therefore, they complained at this moment, and anticipated serious evils to arise from the imperfection of those laws, he confessed he could only regret, that their complaints were met by statements which were neither facts nor arguments. He regretted, that the House had decided not to receive evidence at its bar as to the working of those laws; and had chosen to pass its verdict on this subject, before it had examined any witnesses. He hoped he should never see the day when the landed interest would make common cause with the Chartists. He was an advocate for the total repeal of the Corn-laws, because he was convinced, that in a few years we must come to that, and we had better have it now. Changes of opinion had been adverted to: he begged to quote the opinions of an hon. Member of the other House of Parlirment, Lord Ashburton, before he had been raised to the peerage. He would quote from a debate on the Corn-laws which took place in 1828. The hon. Member said, speaking of the Dutch—

"They were still populous, and had once been extremely opulent and powerful as a manufacturing nation; nor let hon. Gentlemen ever forget that, from that opulence and power they had declined absolutely from levying enormous duties upon the corn consumed by their subjects. The same fate, resulting from the same cause, as irresistibly awaited this country, as one day succeeded another. As to the talk about high prices, the danger of our present system arose, not from positive, but from relative, prices. He owned he was amazed at the course which so many Gentlemen had pursued upon this question. How was it possible that any man, having the powers of reasoning or reflection, could come down to that House day after day and talk about protection to corn—protection to wool — protection to oak bark — the difference meanwhile in the price of bread between Great Britain and the natives of the continent being as the difference in favour of the latter between 25*s.* and 64*s.*? How was it possible that they should expect we could go on exporting manufactures as we now did, to the amount of between 50,000,000*l.* and 60,000,000*l.* a-year, there being this frightful disproportion between the relative prices of corn among ourselves and our continental neighbours? Heartily did he wish that some man amongst them, with honesty in his heart, would come down and tell them plainly it was their duty to consider, not how they might get in their own proper rents for that particular year or so, but how the country was to subsist with its establishments for the next twenty or fifty years. But, on the contrary, he declared with pain, that whenever the corn question came on for discussion, it was argued by them on the most selfish and narrow-minded principles that any Legislature ever condescended to listen to."*

It was impossible, in considering this subject, not to look at coming events—at those events to which manufacturers looked forward with apprehension—namely, the decrease in their exports. It was said, and much stress had been laid on the fact, that there had been an increase in the export of our manufactures to some foreign markets; but the still more important fact was overlooked, that we were almost wholly driven from some of our old and best markets, while those markets to which we were beginning to export were at a great distance, and we there had to stand a competition with the produce of other nations very much less burthened than we were. In conclusion, he would say, that if some alteration did not speedily take place in the present system of Corn-laws, the best interests of the country would be jeopardized, and the landed interest itself would receive a blow from which it would not soon recover.

Mr. *Handley* repudiated on the part of those whom he represented, the charges that had been made against them, of ignorance and self-interest, by those who, he did not see on what grounds, arrogated to themselves exclusive intelligence on this and other questions. The conduct of some of the manufacturers had been watched, and the miserable expedient of closing the mills and working at short hours was seen in its true light by the operatives, who now perceived that it was not their comfort or advantage which were aimed at, but the profits and interests of the manufacturers themselves, who would bring the operatives to the degraded condition of those of Prussia and Saxony. One of the great allegations on this subject by the advocates of a change in the present law was, that the proposed change would bring about cheap bread. How had this been made out? The average price of wheat under the present Corn-laws, had been 56*s.* the quarter, while in France, during the same period, it was 40*s.* Now, the difference would make a difference of only 1½*d.* in the quartern loaf, and taking the number of persons in the family of an operative at six, which was rather above the general average, and saying that they consumed forty pounds of bread, or ten quarterns in the week, the difference in the prices he had stated would make only a difference of 15*d.* in the weekly expenditure of that family for bread; and, he would ask, would that be found to countervail the disadvantages which would arise in other respects from the change in the present law? He would also ask those who would take away all protection against foreign competition from the corn-growers of this country—he would ask those, were they prepared to give up the protection which the manufacturers now enjoyed against foreign competition? He would ask his right hon. Friends, the Chancellor of the Exchequer and the President of the Board of Trade, if they were ready to give up the taxes on foreign articles of consumption which competed with our own produce? He was sure that his right hon. Friends, if present, would answer in the negative. It was admitted, that there was a *minimum* in the price of manufactures below which the manufacturer could not sell with any chance of profit. The case was similar with respect to the price of agricultural produce, and why should not, he again asked, the agriculturist get an equal protection with the manufacturer of woollens or cottons? Would the woollen manufacturers of Yorkshire or Stroud be satisfied to be exposed to the full competition of the foreign manufacturer of those articles? Or would our West-India planters be satisfied with the cultivation of beetroot sugar here? He believed not. The whole of the land was mortgaged to the public creditor; but if they found nothing but naked and untilled fields, what would be the value to the public creditor of the collateral security of mills and machinery? Many hon. Members who had taken a part in the debate, had advocated a change in the present system, without informing the House what the nature of that change should be. If the noble Lord, the Secretary for the Home Department, were now in his place, he would ask him, was it fair to talk of changes, and not tell them what those changes should be? But they were told that the change, whatever it was, would be beneficial to the agriculturists? Now, he must say, that he spoke the sentiments of 8,000 constituents, and he was sure that not one of them desired any such change; however, on their parts, he would say, that they, no doubt, felt grateful for this desire to benefit them in spite of themselves. Let him add, that out of 235 parishes in the district which he represented, little short of 200 had declared themselves against any change in the present system. Much stress had been laid on the fluctuations in the price of corn in the last year, but he would appeal to all who were acquainted with the subject, whether they remembered any such year since 1816, or before that, since 1801, or before that, since 1795? But corn was not the only article in which great fluctuation had taken place in the same time. Would the right hon. Gentleman, the President of the Board of Trade, say that those fluctuations were attributable to the sliding scale of duties? Or would he, in adopting fixed duties, give also fixed seasons, and, rivalling the great Murphy, take the elements under his protection, and in a dry June indulge them with an occasional shower of rain? It was absurd to talk of fluctuations being exclusively confined to corn, or being the result of a scale of duties. This was shown by the fact, that two articles which were subject to fixed duties—he meant tallow and wool—had fluctuated as much in price as any articles mentioned in the *Price Current.* Tallow had fluctuated from 28*s.* to 51*s.*, and wool from 2*s.* 7*d.* to 6*d.* in the pound. As to our being left dependent on any foreign nation for our supply of corn, he would say, that the day when that dependence should arrive would be an unfortunate one for this country. See what might have occurred to our army in the Peninsula when the supply from America had been cut off from us for a time. Why, had it not been for the characteristic foresight of Wellington in getting in six months' provisions for his army instead of three, the embargo in America would have injured it to an extent which 100,000 foreign bayonets had been unable to effect. Under circumstances of scarcity, when we imported 12,000,000 quarters of foreign corn weighing about 2,400,000 tons, it would require 20,000 ships for the corn trade alone, and he apprehended that it would be difficult for all the navies in the world to furnish that number. He would merely call on those hon. Gentlemen who might be induced, by the specious political tactics of others to vote for going into Committee, to consider that if the Corn-laws were doomed to be repealed, whatever might be the substitute proposed, they were placed between the two fires of having either a fixed duty or no duty at all. As to himself, he was of that class who were opposed to the repeal; in short, he was a farmer.

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* Hansard (New Series) Vol. xix. p. 154.

Mr. *Hobhouse* felt himself bound to make a few observations on what he considered to be a most unjust attack of the hon. Member who had just spoken and of others upon those persons by whom he was supported; and if the hon. Member wished to be sure of the truth of what he now stated, he would refer him to the statement recently made by the noble Lord, the other Member for Lincolnshire, at a public meeting of that county. That noble Lord had stated, that this opposition to the Corn-laws was not got up by those who wished to benefit the working classes, but by mere popularity hunters. [*"Hear, hear!"*] Hon. Gentlemen opposite cheered that statement, and he supposed, therefore, that they identified themselves with it; but he would reply, that there was not a more high-minded or intellectual class of men than those who were engaged in the manufactures of the kingdom; and he would say, that the noble Lord was not warranted by facts in attributing to the opposers of the Corn-laws such disgraceful intentions. As to himself, he was not influenced by the pressure from without, and during the last session had voted for inquiry into this subject. He therefore trusted that neither he nor those who acted with him would be attacked with such invidious epithets as those which he had spoken of. The hon. Member for Lincolnshire had repeated the statement which had been frequently made in the course of this debate, as to the object of the motion being to lower the rate of wages. Now, he believed that all those who had inquired into this matter, and whose opinions were entitled to attention, and indeed all those who had written books upon the subject. [*"Laughter."*] Hon. Gentlemen seemed to look with great contempt on such authorities, but those authorities had said that the rate of wages must depend nearly on the supply and the demand. He would now undertake to refute the statements of the right hon. Baronet opposite, who had last night attacked the right hon. President of the Board of Trade and the noble Secretary for the Home Department, saying that they had treated labour as a commodity. He would assert that labour was a commodity, and, in support of that opinion, he would refer to an authority not much liked, perhaps, by hon. Gentlemen opposite, although he spoke of one who was a great political economist—he meant Mr. Burke. That gentleman, in his *Thoughts and Details on Scarcity*, which he published in 1795, had said—"The rate of wages in truth has no direct relation to the price; labour is a commodity like every other, and rises or falls according to the demand." And in the same tract Mr. Burke had also said:—"And, first, I premise that labour is, as I have already intimated, a commodity, and as such an article of trade. If I am right in this notion, then labour must be subject to all the laws and principles of trade, and to regulation foreign to them, and that may be totally inconsistent with those principles and those laws." Hon. Gentlemen might denounce or deride Mr. Burke as a mere political economist, but he was one whose authority was considered great on all political subjects. Burke made the very same statement to which the right hon. Baronet, the Member for Pembroke, had objected, and he left it to the House to decide which was the better authority of the two, the right hon. Baronet, the Member for Pembroke, or Edmund Burke. The hon. Member near him (Mr. Handley) had said that the rise and growth of manufactures on the continent was principally owing to the twenty-five years of peace. He admitted the statement, and thought that it would have been more fair, more practical, and more just, if the fact had been so stated at the beginning; but if peace were pouring its blessings upon foreign countries, if they were then feeling the benefit of it in greater prosperity, and in the superior advantages of trade, he asked was it right, proper, or just, in them, or whether they behaved as became representatives of the English people, when they, by maintaining these odious restrictions upon corn, aided so far in developing the capital of other countries, and of aiding in the destruction of their own manufactures. He was not jealous of foreign manufactures, he did not grudge to see them carrying on the operations of all such trades as were suited to the soil, and the genius of the respective countries in which they were fitted to flourish. But at the same time he claimed for the manufacturers of England that no injustice should be done to them—he claimed this for the manufacturers which had enabled them to carry on successfully a war which had not been undertaken by them, but by the agriculturists. It was a war that in his opinion had been carried on upon most unjust principles. It was a war to sustain tyranny abroad, for the purpose of preventing reform at home. That odious and unjust war hon. Gentlemen opposite never could have carried on but for the manufacturers, and the consequent prosperity of the country. He hoped, therefore, that it would no longer be said, because the manufactures of the Continent had increased by the long duration of peace, that we were still to maintain this restriction upon corn. He would next proceed to another argument of the hon. Member near him, which had also been frequently referred to in this debate. The hon. Member had asked, what was to become of the rural population if the Corn-laws were repealed? He might reply that every one of the arguments used upon this point, went in support of views he himself entertained. If by the change a great many lands would be thrown out of cultivation, and a great many labourers thrown out of employment, what did it prove, but that they were growing corn upon these lands more expensively than it could be had from abroad, and they were allowing labourers to be employed to disadvantage? He fairly admitted that this was a principle that made against immediate abrogation, and the instantaneous adoption of a free trade; but it was also an argument in favour of the principle itself. He was anxious, in the next place, to make a few observations on the statement made by the hon. Member for the county of Brecknock as to the quantity of corn that had been destroyed as unfit for use. He found on inquiry, that the quantity was not very great, and that it amounted only to 829 quarters, which was imported in 1831, and destroyed in 1837. For six years it had been lying in warehouses at an expense generally calculated at not less than 6*s.* per quarter, and the House must be aware that the merchants were men of too much sense to import much grain into the country at such an expense. The hon. Member near him, had alluded to the fluctuation in the price of corn, and on this point he would refer him to an authority to which he appeared much attached — namely, the work of Mr. M'Culloch, in which it was said, that although in a particular country the variations in price might be very great, yet it was not very great generally on an average throughout the world, but at the same time there must be always some. But let the House consider the great difference between the highest and lowest price of corn in this country. Under the present system, the lowest price had been 39*s.* 4*d.*, and the highest 64*s.* 7*d.*; and had not the noble Lord, the Secretary for the Home Department, and the right hon. President of the Board of Trade demonstrated that this must necessarily be the case with a fluctuating scale, because when the price of corn rose as it had done in the present year, more land was brought into cultivation, and the increased produce then caused a change in the price. He was, therefore, against this system, and in his opinion it was as injurious to the agriculturist as it was to the manufacturer. There was another point which had not yet been touched upon, and that was the principle of the present law. It had been said over and over again, and reiterated in that debate, that a real protecting duty was only an equivalent for additional and extra burdens which farmers had to bear. Now, he found by the present law, that when wheat was 60*s.* per quarter, the duty was 25*s.*, and that with an increase of price that duty diminished, until at 73*s.* it became only 1*s.*; and yet, whether wheat was 73*s.* or only 60*s.*, the burdens of the agriculturist did not vary in proportion, but continued the same although perhaps for several years they had been gradually diminishing. It was contended that the real object of this law was to regulate and determine prices; but to him it appeared to be as odious and tyrannical an Act as any set of men could ever institute. He really did not think the agriculturists would be losers to the extent that was supposed, and on this subject he had documents that he could read to the House, but would not detain them by doing so. By one of those documents, however, it appeared that Mr. Dawson had in 1814 stated to the Committee that there was a constant temptation amongst farmers to overcrop the land, and that the direct operation of this law would be to encourage that system. He would also put this question on one other ground—he would compare this law with others. The House had passed a Factory Bill, and a Poor Law Bill, and he would say, that the principle of the present Corn-laws was directly against the principles of those measures. Was it not a mockery of a grievance, was it not unjust, to tell the manufacturers that they would not raise the rate of wages, and yet that the agriculturists of this country should be engaged in a deep conspiracy to raise the price of corn? He knew nothing to be compared with the Corn-laws, but the legislation of Jack Cade. It was undertaking to fix the price of goods. As to the appeal of the hon. Member for Lincolnshire to the right hon. the Chancellor of the Exchequer in his absence with respect to the revenue: the claims of the public creditor, it was said by him, could not be discharged if the protecting duty for corn was taken off. Upon this point he referred to the statement of the hon. Member for the Tower Hamlets, and to the proof he had given that in the years in which corn was low in price, the revenue was high, and so, *vice versa*, when corn was high, the revenue was low. The fact was, that the repeal of the Corn-laws would not only raise the revenue, but diminish the public burdens, by reducing the expenditure upon the public establishments. They had heard the other night of the expenses of victualling the navy and army. These expenses were greatly increased by the fictitious price that was set on corn. He hoped that the Chancellor of the Exchequer would show the hon. Member for Lincolnshire, that a repeal of the Corn-laws would be expedient not only in reducing the expenditure, but also in increasing the revenue. This was a matter which could not be lightly treated, nor hastily disposed of, for if the motion before the House were rejected, hon. Members would be obliged to hear it again and again. The subject ought to be brought forward in every way; and as the advocates for repeal could not be heard by their counsel at the Bar, he hoped that hon. Members would introduce it in every collateral manner that they possibly could. He knew that this language was not pleasing to hon. Gentlemen opposite, and that the prospect it presented to them could not be at all agreeable to them. He was not quite sure that Government was anxious for this course of proceeding, as all that they must naturally be always desirous for was, to bring the public business of the Session to a close as speedily as possible. He said that this was the business the most important of all, and he did not know how they could be engaged more nobly than in redressing the grievances of the entire people. When the hon. Member for Lincolnshire spoke of the number of petitions upon this subject, he presumed that the hon. Member referred to Lincolnshire; but he only wondered, when the hon. Member addressed himself to that point, that his party had not suggested to him that he was touching upon dangerous ground. He had heard himself the number of petitioners on both sides. He supposed that the number of petitioners was, within a few months, not less than 418,000 for repeal, and the number of the other party did not, he believed, for he spoke from recollection, amount to one-third of that number. The advocates of repeal had the public—they had the people, determined and resolved upon demanding redress, even until they extorted it from reluctance. They would speak out in a voice not to be misunderstood, and if they could not obtain justice from that House, they would resort to all those unconstitutional methods which he, for one, should deplore. It rested with that House to prevent the people from having recourse to such means, by redressing those enormous grievances, which were a crime and a disgrace to the whole country. In the general statement made by the hon. Member for Kilkenny he agreed, and he certainly could have wished that the whole weight of the Government had been thrown into the scale in favour of the repeal of the Corn-laws. But he would tell the Gentlemen opposite, that he would rather have the Corn-laws made an open question in the

Cabinet than a close one on the other side of the House. The eyes of the country were anxiously looking to the votes to be recorded that night, and he hoped the people would not perceive, that whilst there was impartiality on that (the Ministerial) side of the House, whilst they saw the Gentlemen around him voting in reference to the present question in different ways, he trusted they would not perceive all the Gentlemen opposite leagued in close compact against any change of the present system of Corn-laws. If, on the contrary, they saw the other side of the House banded together to resist the motion, the people would say that it had not been considered dispassionately, and without reference to party feelings. If they saw the Members for opulent trading and manufacturing towns united in this question with the representatives of agricultural counties, they would know what sort of judgment to form of the hon. Gentlemen opposite, for they would see them unable to co-operate with the advocates of change, of which they approved, because they were entirely fettered by party trammels. He did hope and trust that this might not be the case; he hoped they would rise superior to party considerations; that they would discard those invidious and often unmeaning distinctions which prevented men acting for the benefit of their country. He hoped they would that night join with the supporters of the motion. But, whether they did or not, it was his firm opinion that they ought to do so. He, at all events, was resolved to have his conscience clear with his country; and, that he might not seem to participate in the unjust and odious protection to corn, he should give his vote in favour of the motion of the hon. Member for Wolverhampton.

Sir *R. Peel:*—Sir, as this is the fourth night of the debate upon the Corn-laws; and as I do not intend to avail myself of those daily discussions upon collateral topics, with which we have been threatened by the hon. Gentleman, (the menace of which is infinitely more formidable to me than that of the physical force to which he has alluded), I desire to take advantage of this opportunity to express my opinions upon this subject. The hon. Gentleman, in the conclusion of his observations, deprecated unanimity upon this side of the House. He exhorted us not to exhibit to an admiring country, so extraordinary a contrast with his own side of the House, and especially with her Majesty's Government. Now if the hon. Gentleman had deprecated unanimity amongst the agricultural Members, for fear that it might be inferred, that they were influenced by motives of self-interest, I could understand his exhortation to disunion; but that which he fears and deprecates, is not the harmonious action of a single and exclusive class, swayed by the same fears and motives; he evidently anticipates from the progress of this discussion, and from the preponderance of the argument, that the Representatives of the agricultural, the commercial, and the manufacturing interests, out of deference to the opinions and feelings of their respective constituents, will unite in resistance to the repeal of the Corn-laws, not in order to protect the special interests of one class of the community, but the general interests of the whole. There are two modes of arguing a question of this kind. The first, and that which is infinitely the most convenient to the speaker, and the most palatable to a popular assembly, is to avoid any reference to dry details and close reasoning, to seize on some weak point in the speech of an incautious adversary, or to make an appeal on some party ground, to the excited feelings and passions of your audience. The other is calmly to review the arguments opposed to you which have been chiefly relied upon in debate, to assign to such as cannot be satisfactorily answered their proper weight, and to attempt to refute those which may admit of refutation. This latter is the course I mean to pursue, from deep conviction of the magnitude of the question and respect for the interests involved in it; but in order to pursue it satisfactorily, I must claim that patience and attention, which I incur the risk of forfeiting by preferring arguments and details, dull and uninteresting in themselves, to more popular and exciting appeals. I wish to review generally the reasons that have been alleged for a repeal or material alteration of the Corn-laws; not those only that have been relied on in the present discussion, but those also which though apparently forgotten in this particular debate, were mainly insisted on at the commencement of Corn-law agitation. Before these debates began, and previously to the commencement of this Session, I inferred that the chief stress would be laid upon the decaying state of commerce and manufactures. When I found that agitation was determined on, that the board of delegates had been constituted, that appeals were made to physical force, that the aristocracy and the landed proprietors of the country were denounced to public vengeance by those portions of the press which are generally the advocates of the existing Government. I thought that the depressed state of commerce and of manufactures, and the impoverished condition of the mechanic and artisan would be brought prominently forward. But what has become in this debate of the depressed state of manufactures? Why have the delegates been forgotten? When the Member for Kendal (Mr. G. W. Wood) stated on the first night of the Session, that manufactures were recovering from depression, and that the general commerce of the country was in a sound and satisfactory state, he provoked the utmost indignation by the manly candour of his avowals. Was he right or was he wrong in his statements? If he was right, why has he been punished for his honesty? If he was wrong, why have not you exposed his error? The fact is, you know that he was right, and that official documents, since published, have confirmed his statements. You know there could have been no permanent advantage in his concealment of facts, which if withheld, those documents must shortly have exhibited. The displeasure which he has incurred, the punishment with which he has been visited, prove that he deprived the advocates for repeal of the argument on which they had mainly relied, when he publicly proclaimed with the authority belonging to his name and station, that manufactures were rapidly reviving, and that commerce was in a satisfactory condition. The Member for Kendal, holding the high office of President of the Chamber of Commerce for Manchester, disposed of the first allegation—namely, of present decay, and general distress—when he declared it to be his opinion that the commerce of England is at the present moment in a most satisfactory condition —that he never recollected a period when the return to a state of healthy commerce and of comparative prosperity followed so rapidly a season of preceding depression; when he showed that the shipping interest of the country is now in a vigorous condition, and is rapidly extending; and that, comparing the exports of the principal objects of British manufacture in the year 1838, with the average of the four preceding years, there is an excess in favour of the former of 3,112,000*l.* of declared value, being an increase of 7½ per cent. When it became necessary to abandon the first position, another was assumed. It was said—

"True, the general amount of exports has increased, but the increase has taken place in respect to those articles which most nearly approach the raw material itself, for the production of which the least degree of manual skill and labour is required, and which constitute the elements of foreign manufactures, competing with, and injuring our own. The very increase, therefore, so far from being an indication of prosperity, is a sign of decay."

The Member for Manchester (Mr. Phillips), takes this view of the question, and assures us that there is ground for serious apprehension, with respect to the future stability of our manufacturing and commercial superiority. I should attach the utmost importance to these apprehensions, if they were shewn to be well-founded. So intimate is the sympathy between the condition of agriculture and trade, so powerful and immediate is the force of their reciprocal action upon each other, that if the prosperity of trade be endangered, the narrowest and most exclusive advocate of the interests of agriculture cannot be blind to the consequence. But the Member for Manchester should not demand from us implicit faith in mere predictions. He should explain the ground on which his apprehensions are founded. If they are fortified by argument, or official documents, they are entitled to the utmost respect; but prediction without argument, and apprehensions not sustained by official returns, cannot be considered conclusive. I place against the authority of the Member for Manchester, high as it unquestionably is, this paper, entitled "Trade and Navigation," delivered within the last week, not called for by an advocate of the Corn-laws, but presented by her Majesty's command. This paper, the most recent and most authentic document we have, does not corroborate the statement that our exports of those branches of manufacture into which skill and manual labour enter, are upon the decline. On the contrary, this paper exhibits a very rapid recovery from depression. It contains a comparative view of the exports of British produce and manufactures, and an account of the shipping employed in the foreign and coasting trade for the years 1837 and 1838. Now, in the year ending the 30th September, 1837, the average price of corn was *56s. 5d.* In the latter year ending on the same day, it was *59s. 10d.* We have, therefore, an advance in the price of subsistence, and whatever may be the tendency of such an advance, the immediate effect of it has not been to repress the elastic energy and buoyancy of manufacturing industry, so far as we can form a judgment from this return. The total declared value of exports in the two years respectively is as follows:—

1837.	1838.
£36,228,468.	£43,338,839

Let us now refer to the items of which this general aggregate is formed for the purpose of inquiring how far the allegation is correct, that although the general result may appear to be favourable, it is in fact otherwise, on account of the relative increase of the export of those articles, which are rather the foundations for foreign manufactures, than the elaborate produce of our own.

	Year.	Declared value £.
In Woollen-yarn the export in .	1837	was 333,098
” ”	1838	365,657
In Cotton-yarn in	1837	6,965,942
” ”	1838	7,430,582
In Linen-yarn in	1837	479,000
” ”	1838	655,000

exhibiting an increase no doubt in the export of articles into which labour and skill enter only in a slight degree.

But then the increase in Woollen manufactures, other than Yarn was from
4,660,000*l.* in 1837, to
5,792,000*l.* in 1838.
In cotton manufactures from
13,640,000*l.* in 1837, to
16,700,000*l.* in 1838.
In Linen manufactures from
2,133,000*l.* in 1837, to
2,919,000*l.* in 1838.
In Glass there was a decline from
477,000*l.* in 1837, to
376,000*l.* in 1838.
But in Silk manufactures there was an increase, from 503,000*l.* in 1837, to
778,000*l.* in 1838.
In Hardware and Cutlery, from
1,460,800*l.* in 1837, to
1,507,000*l.* in 1838.
In Earthenware, from
563,000*l.* in 1837, to
670,000*l.* in 1838.

Now, looking either at the general result, of an increase in our total exports, from 36,228,000*l.* in 1837, to 43,338,000*l.* in 1838, or at the increase in specific articles of export, can it be denied that such an instance of recovery from depression, coincident with an increase in the price of food, is a satisfactory indication that the foundations of our manufacturing superiority are not undermined by the rivalry of foreign powers, and at any rate, not undermined through the operation of the Corn-laws? It was said, on a former occasion, that a mere increase in the quantity of exported articles is no test of manufacturing prosperity; that the money value may have declined while the quantity has increased. Be it so;—but the calculations to which I have been referring, are calculations not of quantity but of money value. The same official paper contains an account of the shipping employed in the foreign and coasting trade in 1837, and 1838:—

In the first year there were 18,113 vessels employed in the Foreign trade, of which, 12,252 were British vessels.

In the last year, 19,639, of which 12,890 were British.

Now for the next allegation. It was to this effect:—

> "All this may be true, but it has become necessary in order to maintain the contest for manufacturing superiority with other nations, to make so large a reduction in the price of the exported article, that the home manufacture is carried on with scarcely any profitable return to those engaged in it. Compare the proportion which the declared value of our exports in late years has borne to the quantity, with the proportion which it bore in former years, and you will find that the value is almost stationary, or, perhaps, declining, while the quantity rapidly increased."

This was the position of Alderman Waithman, which he manfully maintained for several successive years, notwithstanding he could procure no support for it. We admit the fact, that the price of the exported article, in many branches of manufacture, has declined, but we deny, that it follows as a just inference from that fact, that profits have been proportionally affected. It is impossible to make this point more clear, or to quote higher authority upon it, than by referring to statements made, and evidence given by manufacturers of Manchester of the highest character. In the year 1830, a committee inquired into the state of the East India

Trade, and the policy of opening it to British enterprise. Mr. Birley, a former President of the Chamber of Commerce of Manchester, and Mr. Kennedy, were examined before that committee. Their object was to show the probability that there would be a great export of cotton twist to India, if the trade were opened; and a paper prepared by Mr. Lee, of Manchester, from which the following is an extract, was produced for that purpose.

"In the year 1782, cotton twist, by Sir R. Arkwright's invention, exceeded the cost of the raw material 20*s*. in the pound for what is called in the trade No. 60. It now exceeds it by the mule only 1*s*. 6*d*. per lb., and taking into account the depreciation in the value of money, it cannot be estimated at less than a reduction of from 20*s*. to 9*d*. per pound—an astonishing instance of skill and economy superadded to the great advancement in both, previously made by Sir R. Arkwright."

Q. "Can you furnish the Committee with a comparison of the cost of labour in producing yarns in England in 1812 and 1830?"

A. "I can. I have a statement showing it by the pound; and also the price of a continuous thread a mile long, in 1812 and 1830:

Price of cotton		Price of labour.	
1812	1830	1812	1830
2*s*.	10*d*.	1*s*. 6*d*.	1*s*. 0½*d*.

Cost of manufactured article per lb.

In 1812 . .	3*s*. 6*d*.
In 1830 . .	1*s*. 10½*d*.

"Is it then a matter of surprise that the selling price of a manufactured article should be reduced, when there is a reduction of one hundred per cent. in the price of the raw material, and when by the wonderful contrivances of mechanical ingenuity, the same manufactured article which in 1782 cost in labour twenty shillings the pound, in 1812 cost eighteen pence?

"It may be said, that there was a difference in the price of labour between 1812 and 1830?—There was not—the price of labour in Mr. Kennedy's calculations, for the two periods, is the same."

He says,—

"In 1812 and 1830 the wages of labour are estimated at twenty pence per diem for every person employed, including men, women and children. The reduction, therefore, in the cost of labour was not a reduction of wages."

It has been observed in this debate, that British manufactured articles are selling in foreign markets for less than prime cost, and that foreign markets are overstocked. Hear Mr. Kennedy also on this point. He was asked—

"Do not you know that English manufactures at the present instant in India are now selling below the prime cost?"

He replied—

"There is not a market in the world which we do not sometimes overstock, but I always expect good to result from that."

At the same time I do not deny that considering the extent of competition, there may be a material reduction of the profits of manufacturers, and that the pressure of such reduction is severely felt by many of them who have small establishments and a limited command of capital. They contend to a disadvantage with those who can undersell them in consequence of the employment of large numbers of operatives in new manufactories built on the most improved principles, and filled with the best machinery. The position of the small capitalist does not materially differ in principle, (I trust it does in degree), from that of the hand-loom weavers, after the invention of the power-loom. But this disadvantage to the small manufacturer is not traceable to the Corn-laws. It is not caused by the reduction of profits. If the large capitalist could realise a profit of twenty per cent. instead of the present amount of his profits, (small as it may be) he would equally avail himself of the advantage to which his capital and consequent command over both labour and machinery entitle him. But if profits are so unreasonably low, how does it happen that the number of new factories has greatly increased within the last few years, that the factory destroyed by accident is instantly replaced, and that new factories are constantly erected? The reason sometimes given, namely, that those who are already embarked in manufacturing speculations, find it necessary to extend their establishments for the purpose of increasing the scanty amount of profit, is not very satisfactory. It does not at any rate account for the building of new factories by new speculators. It is said indeed, that although new factories have been built, and old ones enlarged, this has not taken place very recently; nay, more, that many of the factories so built, are at present either totally or partially closed. This was said especially in the case of Preston, I believe. Now I hold in my hand a letter from Preston, calculated to mitigate the apprehensions on this head, which former statements may have caused.

This letter positively declares that only two mills, and those very small ones, have reduced the time of working; that the owner of one of these mills is a Corn-law delegate; and that the owners of both of them, finding no other persons prepared to follow their example, have wisely resolved to sail with the stream, and resume their accustomed labours. The last and the most important statement of the manufacturers, was to this effect: "All this may be very true; the declared value of exports may have increased, more mills may have been built, yet the increased quantity of manufactured goods is produced in consequence of the reduction of the wages of the labourer, and of exacting from him a degree of labour which he is unable to bear." Now, I consider this statement, that the condition of the labourer has been rendered worse by the operation of the Corn-law, a most important one, and I have no hesitation in saying, that unless the existence of the Corn-law can be shewn to be consistent, not only with the prosperity of agriculture and the maintenance of the landlord's interest, but also with the protection, and the maintenance of the general interests of the country, and especially with the improvement of the condition of the labouring class, the Corn-law is practically at an end. But let us look to those documents which contain evidence as to the general condition of the working classes, and do they, I ask, shew that the condition of the poor in those towns where manufactures are chiefly carried on has been rendered worse or their comforts curtailed? I do not allude to those peculiar cases of individual suffering which will always be found where there are such complicated relations of society as exist in England. It will ever be the case that there will be particular cases of distress and suffering calculated to awaken our deepest sympathy; but the argument from individual cases of privation is not conclusive. It admits, too, of easy application to agricultural distress in case the Corn-laws were repealed, and the poor soils thrown out of cultivation. We might adduce the case of the peasant advanced in life, attached to the spot of his birth, able and willing to labour, unfit for any other than rural occupations, banished from home, and forced to seek a scanty subsistence in a manufacturing town. We should look at general results, and though not altogether satisfactory, yet perhaps no better evidence as to general results can be had than the Reports of the Savings' Banks. You say that your object is, that the manufacturing class should not merely be enabled to provide themselves with the means of daily subsistence, but to lay by something for the future comfort of themselves and their families. A wise and benevolent object! Let us see whether it is altogether frustrated. First, take the case of Liverpool. I direct attention to Liverpool because it is the port most extensively engaged in the export of manufactured goods, and would consequently immediately feel the effects of any decrease in manufacturing prosperity. I am fortunately enabled to institute a comparison between the first period of the operation of the Corn-laws and the latter period, and thus to ascertain if any injurious effects have been produced upon the population of that important town by those laws. I shall refer to the first four years which elapsed after the commencement of the present Corn-laws, and the four years last past.

During the first four years, namely, the years 1829, 1830, 1831, and 1832, commencing the 20th of November, 1828, and ending the 20th of November, 1832, the number of new accounts opened in the Liverpool Savings' Bank was, according to this statement.	1,300	
The average number of deposits . .		£55,000 0 0
During the last four years, namely, 1835, 1836, 1837, 1838—commencing the 20th of November, 1834, and ending the 20th of November, 1838, the average number of new accounts opened was . . .	2,040	
The average amount of deposits . .		80,000 0 0

Now, does this, I ask, indicate any decline in the condition of the population of Liverpool under the operation of this Corn-law? But I have not confined my inquiries to Liverpool. I am also enabled to produce to the House a comparison of the amount of deposits and the number of accounts in the town of Nottingham.

	£.	s.	d.
In the three months of November, December, and January, 1837-8, the amount of deposits in the savings' bank was . . .	12,270	4	6
And in the three months of November, December, and January, 1838-9, the amount of deposits was . .	13,211	0	0
In the first-named period the amount paid out of the bank was	10,096	0	0
And in the latter period the amount of deposits paid out of the bank was .	9,392	0	0

Thus showing that in the three months which I have quoted of the last year there was an increase of 940*l.*, in the amount of the money paid into the savings' bank, and a decrease of 700*l.*, in the money which had been drawn out. I have a return from Leicester, another town extensively engaged in manufactures.

		£.	s.	d.
In the year ending November 20, 1837, the number of depositors in the Leicester Savings' Bank, whose balances were below 20*l.*, was . .	794			
And in the year ending the 20th of November, 1838, the number of depositors under 20*l.* was .	916			
The amount of the sums deposited in 1837 was . . .		9,843	0	0
And in 1838 . .		10,742	0	0
The total number of depositors in the first year was .	1,682			
And the number in the last year .	1,876			

I have also made inquiries of a similar character with respect to Birmingham.

	£.	s.	d.
In Birmingham, during the three months of November, December, and January, 1837-8, the amount received at the Savings' Bank was .	12,297	15	4
And the amount paid out to depositors by the bank was	9,907	13	2
In the three months — November, December, and January, 1838-9, the amount of deposits was . .	14,870	6	10
And the amount paid by the bank to the depositors .	8,554	5	4

Showing an increase of the deposits and a decrease of the money paid out by the bank. Of course I have not omitted from my inquiry, the chief seats of the cotton manufacture—Glasgow and Manchester. Before I refer to the report of the Savings' Bank at Glasgow, let me pause a moment, to contemplate the wonderful increase in the population and wealth of that great city—an increase, coincident with the operation of those laws which have given protection to domestic agriculture. In 1812 the population of Glasgow amounted to 103,743. The harbour dues received were 4,800*l.* In 1838 the population amounted to 262,000. The harbour dues to 40,260*l.* The increase in the consumption of coal is a still more striking indication of increasing industry, and productive power. In 1831, that is, shortly after the present Corn-laws came into operation, the consumption of coal in Glasgow, was calculated at 561,000 tons. In 1838, the Corn-laws having been in force during the whole interval, having exercised whatever of prejudicial influence they can exercise upon the enterprise and industry of Glasgow, the consumption of coal in the short space of seven years, was more than doubled, amounting to no less than 1,200,000 tons. But to return to the Savings' Banks; the report from which I quote is the third report of the National Savings' Bank of Glasgow, made on the 22nd of February, 1839. It contains a comparative account of the state of the Savings' Bank in the two years ending 20th November, 1837 and 1838 respectively.

In the first year the number of new entrants was .	3,711	
In the second year . .	4,694	
In the first year the amount of deposits was . .		£48,193
In the second . .		£75,798

In the first year the number of depositors from the class of mechanics and artificers, was 1,905. In the second, from the same class 3,119. In the first year, from the class of factory operatives, there were 3,824 depositors. In the second 6,342. In the first year the average of the balances of individual depositors below 20*l.*, was 5*l.* 15*s.* 5*d.* The average of the second year 5*l.* 17*s.* 11*d.*, the increase being only 2*s.* 6*d.* But how is this small increase in the average accounted for? "The great number of new entrants," says the report, "upon very small weekly deposits, is the true and gratifying reason of the apparently slow advancement in the money average of that welcome and deserving class 'not exceeding 20*l.*,' for whose benefit—from steady perseverance and provident habits—the Savings' Bank was especially intended." The last report of Savings' Banks to which I shall refer, is that of Manchester and Salford. The report was made on the 4th of January, 1839. Among the Vice-presidents and Trustees of the institution for the present year are—

Right Hon. C. P. Thomson, M. P.
Mark Phillips, Esq., M. P.
Geo. Wm. Wood, Esq., M. P.
Jos. Brotherton, Esq., M. P.

The report observes :—

"In submitting to the public their twenty-first annual report, the committee feel great pleasure in drawing attention to the gratifying result of their transactions with depositors during the past year. Since their last report, 3,346 new accounts have been opened, 20,453 deposits made, and 109,123*l.*, 13*s.* 3½*d.* deposited; shewing an increase in the business unprecedented in the experience of the institution, the repayments to depositors being proportionally decreased. The difference this year, as compared with the last, is 42,697*l.* 16*s.* 11½*d.* in favour of depositors, and the number of open accounts being now 11,862, shews an increase in them of 1,617."

The prospects of the future are still brighter. The report continues :—

"Notwithstanding this so far most satisfactory progress, the population of Manchester and its neighbourhood affords scope for a much greater extension."

It must have been about the time that this report was in preparation, while the manager and officers of the institution were congratulating themselves on the present success of the Savings' Bank, and on the hope of its rapid extension, and were thus bearing public testimony to the improved condition of the manufacturing classes in Manchester and Salford; that in those very towns commenced the system of agitation, which has received the sanction of the President of the Board of Trade. Then it was, that the delegates were appointed, and meetings organized, and lectures to the labouring classes prepared, for the purpose of stirring up impatience and indignation with the Corn-laws, as the main causes of whatever evils they were exposed to. Then it was that those organs of public intelligence which most strenuously support her Majesty's Government, were denouncing the aristocracy and the landed proprietors as selfish tyrants, fattening on the labour and sufferings of the exhausted poor, and provoking (if other means should fail) the resort to physical force. True it is, the attempt at agitation has failed, not from the returning moderation and good sense of its authors, but because their allegations of manufacturing distress and decaying commerce were contradicted by the Member for Kendal, and by the official returns; and, above all, because they found themselves utterly powerless to guide the tempest which they were able to raise. They soon discovered that agitation could not be restricted within the limits they would assign to it—that it could not be directed exclusively against the proprietors of land—that the confederates, on whom they relied, would turn upon their Leaders and tell them, whether truly or not I will not pretend to determine), "You who profess hostility to the landlords and aristocracy of the country—who impute to those classes of the community selfish motives—who attribute to them the desire to secure their own profits and to grind the poor—we will be no parties to your agitation—we will not lend ourselves to your schemes—we know that your only object is to increase the profits of the cotton-spinner, and by lowering the price of corn, to lower at the same time the rate of wages." I abominate as much as any man the doctrines mixed up with opposition to the Delegates and their projects; but, at the same time, it may be a salutary lesson to those who commence agitation, to find that the first to suffer by the lessons they have taught, are the agitators themselves. I here close the remarks I have to make with regard to the allegations of manufacturing distress, and shall proceed to review the main arguments relied on in the course of the present debate in favour of repeal or alteration of the Corn-laws. First, let us consider what it is that these condemned Corn-laws have actually done. In the nine years intervening between the 30th September 1830, and the 30th September 1838, the average price of wheat has been fifty-four shillings per quarter. Is this an unreasonably high price, compared with former periods, periods, not of war, when the price of corn may have been raised by causes connected with war, but periods of peace?

		s.	d.	
In 1793	wheat was	55	8	per quarter.
1792	..	53	0	
1790	..	56	0	
1789	..	56	0	

The average price of the nine years preceding the war of 1793, was fifty-one shillings. The mere price of corn either in the same country at different periods, or in different countries at the same period, is no satisfactory test either of comparative prosperity, or of the condition of the labouring classes. There might be much greater general prosperity, and much greater individual comfort under high nominal prices than under low. The year 1763, for instance, when the peace of Paris was concluded, is mentioned by writers upon the commerce and manufactures of this country, as the period at which its productive industry started into new life and energy, and began the glorious career which it was destined to run. Now let us compare the decennial prices of corn previously to 1763, with the decennial prices afterwards, and it will be seen that it is possible that manufacturers may flourish, and the condition of the labouring classes may improve, and yet the price of corn be on the increase at home, and also be higher in this country than in other countries. The inference is only good for this, to disprove the assertion, that cheap bread will necessarily benefit the working classes, and necessarily improve trade.

	s.	d.
From 1735 to 1745 the average price of wheat according to the Windsor tables was . .	32	1
From 1745 to 1755 . . .	31	3
From 1755 to 1765 . . .	39	4

The year 1765 was the commencement of new life and energy to productive industry, and what was the decennial average of the price of wheat subsequently?

	s.	d.
From 1765 to 1775 . . .	51	4
1775 to 1785 . . .	47	9
1785 to 1795 . . .	54	4

Shewing a very considerable advance in the price of wheat in the periods of general ease and prosperity. I have remarked that the average price of corn for nine years, ending September 1838, during the prevalence of ordinary seasons, was not more than fifty-four shillings per quarter. It is said, however, that there was during that period great fluctuation in the price, that wheat was seventy-six shillings a quarter at one time, and thirty-six shillings at another, and again, seventy-five shillings and sixpence at a third. This is true; but such variations are, and will continue to be, the inevitable concomitants of variations in the supply, dependent mainly upon the influence of seasons; and it ought not to be forgotten that the weekly averages show that the fall from the highest point to the lowest, and the ascent again from the lowest, was as gradual as it was possible to be under any system of Corn-laws. So much for ordinary seasons. After the autumn of 1838 the Corn-law is submitted to a new trial—the harvest having been a failing one, and there being a necessity for a large import of foreign corn. The imports of the years immediately preceding had been very limited. Our wants having been almost entirely supplied from our own produce, we had not encouraged the cultivation of foreign corn by regular periodical demands. But when the time of pressure arrived, was there any serious difficulty in procuring the requisite supply? Is it not the fact, that, without any interference on the part of the Legislature or the Government, by the silent unaided operation of the existing Corn-laws, the ports were opened to foreign grain, free of duty, and that two millions of quarters of foreign wheat have been available for our consumption? What has been the effect of restrictions on the import of foreign corn upon the agriculture of Ireland? In 1807, the number of quarters imported into this country from Ireland was 463,000. In that year, the markets of this country were opened, without restriction, to Irish corn. In 1830, the quantity of corn imported from Ireland was 2,215,000 quarters. In 1838, 3,474,000. With such facts before us, how the import of foreign corn is to be beneficial to Ireland, or to facilitate the establishment of manufactures in that country, I cannot comprehend. I shall now proceed to state—I hope fairly to state, the general outline and substance of the arguments mainly relied on by the speakers in favour of a change in the present law, who have preceded me. If I omit any important argument, the omission is not intentional. The following appears to me a fair summary of those arguments, that the corn-laws have a tendency, by raising the price of corn at home, to encourage the manufacturing industry of rival nations, and to deteriorate the condition of the working classes at home; that by preventing a regular and certain demand for foreign corn, they derange commercial dealings and diminish the chance of adequate foreign supply at the period of its greatest necessity, caused by the failure of our own produce; that by the suddenness of the demand for foreign corn when the pressure does arise, it becomes necessary to send bullion in exchange for corn instead of manufactures, and thus to incur the risk of derangement of the currency, if not of a stoppage of payments by the bank; that the present Corn-laws tend to aggravate the opposite evils of a too abundant and of a deficient domestic supply, and that they have totally failed to realize the object for which, according to Mr. Canning, they were specially intended, and which he predicted they would fulfil, namely, to insure moderation and steadiness of prices. These are, I believe, the main objections to the present Corn-laws relied on by our opponents. In addition to arguments against these laws, they have the candour also to furnish us with predictions as to the happy consequences which will follow their repeal, predictions which might carry with them some authority, if unfortunately the results which they profess to foresee, were not exactly of an opposite character. That I may avoid all risk of misrepresentation, I will quote the very words in which the prophecies were conveyed. I begin with the Member for the Tower Hamlets, (Mr. Clay). He told us that

> "Other of our chief articles of import, such as sugar, spices, tobacco, tea, wine, are objects of luxury, rather than of necessity—they are the produce likewise of limited portions of the globe, and those mostly distant from our shores; corn, on the contrary, forming the staple of human subsistence, there is scarcely any limit to the demand—if it were at a price within the reach of the labouring classes, and a great demand for our manufactures and full employment consequently afforded them the means of purchase. How wide too, were the regions, how vast the population, with which a free trade in corn would permit us to maintain a beneficial intercourse! There were few climates in which corn could not be produced, whilst it was almost the only staple which could be offered to us in exchange by countries, the vicinity of which would render commercial intercourse the most beneficial, and with which it was most important to us to preserve friendly relations. Almost the whole of central and northern Europe, by soil and climate, was fitted for the production of corn; throughout the wide regions watered by the Elbe, the Weser, and the Vistula, corn may be grown with advantage, and would be grown for our use, if we would permit its importation."

Here then would appear to be a boundless prospect of foreign supply. But what chance would domestic agriculture have of competing with these happy regions? Who would employ capital on domestic improvement when it could be transferred with such profit to fertilize the rich wastes of central and northern Europe? There we are told land pays scarcely any rent, labour is at the rate of five pence a day. Steam is diminishing every hour the distances which separate nations, and skill and machinery will stimulate to an increase of a hundred fold the natural capabilities of a neglected but most fertile soil. All this may be consolatory enough to the manufacturer, but it should be whispered into his ear exclusively, for it is calculated to fill with dismay the proprietor and occupier of land at home. For them, however, there are more encouraging predictions, and, fortunately, from higher authority. Without disparaging that of the Member for the Tower Hamlets, still, from his position, from his avocation, from the habitual caution of his nature, and unwillingness to pronounce opinions not founded on the strictest inquiry, and maturest consideration, the Member for the City of London (Mr. Grote) is entitled to superior consideration. In the same ratio in which the City of London stands to the Tower Hamlets, is the authority of their respective representatives on the subject of the Corn-laws. And what says Mr. Grote?

> "I have taken some pains to acquaint myself with the prices of foreign corn, and with the quantities which might be obtained at those prices; for these two circumstances ought on no account to be separated in looking at the question of the foreign corn trade."

Mr. Grote then proceeds to explain the grounds on which his conclusions are founded, by reference to the prices of wheat at Dantzic and Odessa, and observes:

> "It will be seen, therefore, that in estimating the probable import price under a free trade, assuming 1,000,000 quarters, at 45*s.* I make a large allowance for improvement and extension of culture in foreign lands. It is my impression, that under a perfectly free trade

in corn, a quantity of about 1,000,000 quarters would be supplied from abroad in ordinary years out of the 15,000,000 quarters which we habitually consume in these islands; and, that this supply would come at a price of about 45*s*."

If any confirmation were required to the views of the Member for the City of London, it is supplied by the Member for Sheffield, (Mr. Ward). He observes:

> "What had the agriculturists to fear? When it was considered that wheat was a very bulky article, that but a very small proportion of it, comparatively on an average not more than 250 quarters, could be brought in one vessel; that the range of the exporting countries was very small, he could not understand what the agricultural interest had to apprehend from a change, which, besides, could not be brought into full operation till after a long series of years. Which were the exporting countries? France with a population of thirty millions, and a bad system of agriculture, arising greatly out of a too minute subdivision of land, could never be an exporting country to any considerable extent. Spain, and the other southern countries of Europe, from want of internal communications and other circumstances, could not for a very long period, if at all, export any very large quantity of wheat. From Belgium and Holland we had nothing to fear. Sweden and Norway did not grow sufficient for their own consumption. Coming to Russia and the Baltic, what were the facts? The largest exports from the Baltic in those excellent years, 1802, 1810, and 1818, with the price at Dantzic at 64*s*. 11*d*. never exceeded 680,000 quarters."

Mr. Ward gives the prices of corn at Berlin, Dantzic, and other places, and the quantities exported to England at various periods, and remarks:—

> "Corn was cheaper, no doubt, at Odessa; but the amount of conveyance thence would be three times greater than in the other case; for, besides the freight, there would be the probable damage of much corn in the transit, not to mention that, even at Odessa, it was impossible to say what the price would be raised to, when the enormous amount of English demand came into the market there, where the supply was comparatively so limited. Besides, they had no stock, no farming implements, no manures, no well devised plan of cultivation, and a very small population."

Now I am content to argue the question upon your positions and upon your statement of facts. The agriculturists, you say, need be under no apprehension from foreign imports. The Baltic is almost the only source of supply. The total quantity of foreign wheat which can be imported with a free trade in corn will not exceed one million of quarters, and the price per quarter will be forty-five shillings. Why if this be so, what shameful exaggerations must there have been of the pressure and evil of the present Corn-laws? How perfectly baseless must be the anticipation that there will be a boundless demand for our manufactures in exchange for foreign corn, if the Corn-laws were repealed? Within the last eight or nine years, we have actually imported from foreign countries not less on an average than 750,000 quarters of wheat per annum, and is it credible that the regular future demand for one million of quarters, that is, 250,000 quarters in addition to the past supply, will produce these enormous benefits? Will it again gravely be maintained that the Corn-laws impose a tax of eighteen or twenty millions on the people of this country, when all we are to hope for from their repeal, is an addition of 250,000 quarters to our imports of foreign wheat; the sole difference consisting in a regular, instead of a casual and occasional demand for this supply? Is this to raise the prices on the continent to the level of prices at home? Is this to make a total revolution in the manufacturing industry of the continent, and to restore our pre-eminence by the destruction of foreign competition? Is the import of a little more wheat from the Baltic, to impede the progress in manufactures of France, Belgium, and Switzerland, not one of which countries, we are told, is to increase their demand for our commodities by the export of corn? If Saxony can really undersell us in hosiery by 25 per cent. will so slight a cause restore the balance? What influence will the additional import of Baltic wheat have on the United States, our most formidable competitor, so far as the manufacture of cotton is concerned? The increase in the consumption of cotton for the purpose of manufacture since the year 1826, has been estimated at

In France . .	40 per cent.
In Europe, (exclusive of France . .	100 per cent.
In the United States	160 per cent.
In Great Britain .	129 per cent.

Can it be believed, looking at the present extent of our dealings in raw produce with the United States, that the import of a small additional quantity of corn will sensibly affect the relative position of the two countries, in respect to home manufacture? You taunt me with rejoicing in the successful prosecution of manufactures by other powers. I do not rejoice in it—I merely contend that it is the inevitable consequence of the return to peace, and the continuance of peace for nearly a quarter of a century. I do not participate in your surprise that a country like the United States, with the raw material at hand, as population increases, as towns and cities multiply, and as fertile land, easily accessible, becomes more scarce, should apply herself to the production of certain articles of manufacture. Your surprise reminds me of the Birmingham manufacturer, who prophesied, on the breaking out of war with England, that the crops of the United States would be devoured by vermin, because she had been supplied from Birmingham with mouse-traps, and had not skill enough to manufacture a mouse-trap at home. I will now consider the objection urged against the present laws in respect to the fluctuation of the price of corn in the home market. A speech of Mr. Canning has been quoted, in which he stated, that the great object of the shifting scale of duties was, to insure steady prices, and expressed a confident hope that the prices of wheat would not vary more than from fifty-five to sixty-five shillings a quarter. The result has proved that it was unwise in Mr. Canning to attempt to prescribe exact limits to the range of variation; but it has not proved that either free trade, or a fixed duty would ensure a greater steadiness of price in an article so dependent upon the seasons as corn. Mr. Tooke, in his excellent treatise "On Prices," discusses the remarkable variations in the price of corn during a series of years, and mainly attributes the rise and fall of the price to the abundance or deficiency of supply caused by favourable or unfavourable seasons. Mr. Tooke shows that a similarity of seasons prevails throughout a large portion of the world, and that countries within the same degree of latitude are visited with nearly the same vicissitudes of prosperity and failure with respect to agricultural supply. He relies not only on his own authority, but on that of Adam Smith, of Mr. Burke, and of Mr. Lowe for the fact. Adam Smith speaking of the high price of corn between 1765 and 1776, attributes it to "the effect of unfavourable seasons throughout the greater part of Europe," and expressly says that a long course of bad seasons, though not a very common event, is by no means a singular one. Mr. Tooke says, that there can be no reasonable doubt that bad seasons prevailed here, and, in a still greater degree, throughout the rest of Europe, in the interval between 1765 and 1776, and quotes the valuable works of Mr. Lowe, on the present state of England to the following effect:—

> "The public, particularly the untravelled part of the public, are hardly aware of the similarity of temperature prevailing through what may be called the corn country of Europe: we mean Great Britain, Ireland, the north of France, the Netherlands, Denmark, the north-west and north-east of Germany, and, in some measure, Poland. All this part is situated between 45 and 55 degrees of latitude, and subject, in a considerable degree, to the prevalence of similar winds."

Mr. Lowe remarks on the smilarity of seasons in England and continental Europe, in several recent years which he names, in 1794, in 1798, in 1799. He says:—

> "In 1811 the harvest was deficient throughout the north-west of Europe, from one and the same cause, namely, blight, while that of 1816 was still more generally deficient from rain, and want of warmth."

Now, if you are right in maintaining that the shores of the Baltic will afford our chief supply, and if, in reliance on that supply, we diminish materially the production of corn at home, the misfortune of a generally deficient harvest may involve us in the greatest peril. In ordinary seasons, we may safely trust to a regular supply from abroad, and the discouragement of home production may not be seriously felt—but if the common calamity should arrive, (and Mr. Tooke and the highest authorities show that it ought to be foreseen) then we may have cause bitterly to repent our loss of independence, and to find that the encouragement we gave to home production, by restrictive duties, was a provident insurance againstthe dangersof famine. It will not be the hostility, it will not bet he caprice of foreign nations, that will withhold from us the usual supply; but the paramount duty they owe to their own people will induce them, in the moment of real pressure, to take the very step which France and other countries of Europe have actually taken within the last six months, and interdict the exportation of grain. Should that event occur, it is possible that the wealth of England may command a considerable supply, but in proportion to the deficiency at home, in proportion to the suddenness of the demand, must be our exertions. According to your statements our chief dealings will be confined to the Baltic; Odessa and the United States are too distant to permit any regular import. We shall not then have encouraged, by our dealings with distant States in ordinary seasons, any superfluous supply, to be available in the moment of need. Should the corn-growing countries of the Baltic be visited, at the same time with ourselves, with a deficient harvest, we shall have to export bullion for the purchase of corn wherever we can find it, and thus encounter that every risk of deranging the money market, and suspending payments in cash, which you consider the peculiar defect of the present law. The more you increase your dependence on foreign supply, the more, as it appears to me, do you increase, in the event of severe and general pressure, the risk of a monetary derangement. I have been referring to the authority of Mr. Tooke, mainly for the purpose of shewing that the present Corn-law ought not to be condemned because it has not ensured steadiness of price; for, that under any system of law, in respect to an article so dependent as corn is upon the variableness of seasons, to an article, of which the supply cannot be suddenly limited, or extended (as it may be in the case of manufactures) in proportion to the demand, there must be unavoidably great fluctuations of price. The case of wool has been referred to by the President of the Board of Trade, and by the Secretary at War, (Lord Howick) as an example of the benefit to be expected from subjecting corn to similar regulations in respect to import. They are quite triumphant on the discovery, that since a fixed and very low duty was imposed upon the import of foreign wool, the price of wool in the home market has increased. But they never told us whether the price of wool had been more steady. Now, what is the fact? From 1819 to the end of 1824, there was a duty of sixpence per pound on foreign wool. From the 10th December, 1824 foreign wool has been importable without restriction, at a fixed duty of one penny per pound. Has the removal of protection increased the steadiness of price? Just the reverse—I quote the following list of prices from a letter from Mr. Ellman, one of the highest authorities on the subject of wool, being the prices at which he disposed of his own wool, the best Southdowns, in a succession of years, before and after the reduction of the duty on foreign wool, from sixpence to one penny per pound. Price of Southdown wool.

In 1819	..	1	6	per lb.
1820	..	1	6	
1821	..	1	6	
1822	..	1	6	
1823	..	1	6	
1824	..	1	6	

Duty on foreign wool, being 6*d*. per lb.

In 1825	..	1	0	per lb.
1826	..	1	0	
1827	..	0	9	
1828	..	0	9	
1829	..	0	9	
1831	..	1	3	
1833	..	2	0	
1837	..	1	3	
1838	..	1	10	

Duty on foreign wool, being 1*d*. per lb.

Now, during the period above-mentioned, the import of foreign wool has increased from four or five millions to nearly forty millions of pounds, the sources of our supply have been greatly extended, trade has been perfectly free, duties almost nominal, and yet the price of wool in the home market, which was steady under the restrictive system, has been subject to very great fluctuation since its abandonment. If the argument from wool be at all applicable to corn—if the same result may be expected in the case of corn that has actually followed in the case of wool, what will be the consequence from a low fixed duty on foreign corn? Corn will be dearer in the home market, and the prices more unsteady. Is this the promised benefit to manufacturers on the one hand, and agriculturists on the other? A fixed duty on foreign corn will give you dearer bread and more unsteady prices. As a substitute for the existing laws we have two counter-proposals: the one for a repeal of all prohibitory duties—the other for the imposition of a fixed, in lieu of a fluctuating, scale of duty. The first recommended by the Member for Wolverhampton, the second by the President of the Board of Trade, and the Members of her Majesty's Government in this House.

Let us first consider the proposal of simple repeal. The Member for Wolverhampton says, that this is exclusively a landlord's question, that the landlord's interests are the only interests affected by it, that to the tenant it is a matter of indifference. He says the dealing in land, is like the dealing in any other commodity, the sale of a horse, or the sale of any retail article: that the landlord is a seller, the tenant a purchaser, with the free option for each to accept or reject the offer that may be made. But in the very same speech in which this position was maintained, there was a description of the farmer which seemed to except him from the ordinary condition of a perfectly voluntary agent and free purchaser. In that speech we were told that the farmers were a prejudiced body of men;—men strongly attached to localities and withal very ignorant. [Mr. *Villiers*—I said they had not much education]. Men who in dealing might be taken easy advantage of. The hon. Gentleman has not had much dealings with farmers, or he would not say that. Men of no intelligence. [Mr. *Villiers*—I did not say that.] Well, of little education—not men of business—much attached to localities—unable to transfer themselves and their capital to other pursuits. Why, that is what I rely on as constituting the distinction between dealing in land and purchasing an ordinary article. We are considering the interests of a class which, according to your own showing, consists of men without much education, not men of business, greatly attached to localities, apt to make engagements which are very unwise, and willing to agree to any terms which landlords may propose. Now, surely, if this be true, the present generation of farmers have a very deep interest in the question of the Corn-laws. The interest of those who cultivate the land under lease is manifest enough. But has the tenant at will no interest? Fixed by habit and attachment to the place of his birth,—unfit for mercantile affairs—unable to transfer his capital to other pursuits; could he contemplate without dismay any material reduction in the value of agricultural produce, or any material change in the relation which he bears to other classes of society? Could his interests be so distinguished from the interests of his landlord, that the latter would be the exclusive sufferer by a repeal of the Corn-laws? You tell the farmer, this simple credulous man, that it is manifestly his interest, and that of all other classes of the community, to buy corn at the cheapest market. He says, he cannot enter into competition with the foreign grower, whose land is more fertile, who commands labour at one-third of the rate, and who is free from the incumbrances of public and local taxes to which he is subject. You reply to him, that because we bear one burthen that is no reason we should bear another; no reason why, because we are taxed heavily to pay the public creditor, we should voluntarily undertake another burden, by paying more for our bread. But, says the farmer, "Extend the same principle to everything else as well as to corn. Don't make me the sole victim of this excellent doctrine. Let me grow my own tobacco—let me manufacture and consume my own malt. Look at every article I wear, from the sole of my shoe to the crown of my hat—every thing is taxed, and taxed for the purpose of protection to manufactures—my shoes, my buttons, my hat, my gloves, my silk handkerchief, my watch, every article of manufactured linen. Whatever I require for domestic use is taxed. Gold and silver plate, paper, china, clocks, thread, pots, wax, wire, every letter of the alphabet presents some article of domestic manufacture protected by taxation from foreign competition. If it be right to buy corn in the cheapest market, it is right to buy every thing else; and if the article I sell is to exempt from protection, let the article I buy be exempt also." What answer have you for the farmer? Can you deny the justice of his appeal? Nay more, suppose the farmer asks you to begin with the manufacturer before you visit him, will his request be an irrational one? Suppose he says, "I am a man of little education, of limited views, not a man of business, little versed in the principles of political economy, and not very clearly comprehending the doctrine of free trade; spare me for the present, and make the first experiment on my neighbour the manufacturer. He is educated, intelligent, a man of business, not attached to localities, sees all the evils of restrictive duties, and is ready to waive the advantage of protection. I the more earnestly implore you to deal first with the manufacturer, for I greatly fear, if you begin with me, that you will discover hereafter, that the principles of free trade, though applicable to corn, are not applicable to manufactures, that there are insurmountable difficulties in discriminating between duties for protection and duties for revenue, and that you will finally tell me, that the welfare of manufactures and of agriculture is inseparably united, and that it will be for the manifest advantage of agriculture, that the protecting duties on domestic manufactures should not be hastily withdrawn." These apprehensions, if so urged by the farmer, are clearly not without foundation, for no less an authority than the Prime Minister has declared, that, that man must be insane, must be actually a mad man, who would propose in the present condition of this country the abolition of all protective duties and the practical enforcement of the principles of free trade. Free trade in corn, however, is not the sole alternative. Her Majesty's Ministers prefer a fixed duty either to the fluctuating scale, or to the simple repeal of the Corn-laws. Now every argument against protection to home produce, such for instance as the policy of buying corn in the cheapest market, and the folly of adding to the incumbrance of the public debt, another incumbrance in the shape of a tax upon corn, applies in principle with equal force to the fixed as to the fluctuating duty. The conflict between the advocates for free trade, and the advocates for fixed duty, will commence the very moment they have apparently triumphed over us. But what avails it to profess yourselves advocates for a fixed duty, unless you have determined on its amount. How easy it is for any noble Lord or hon. Member to say,—"I am opposed to the total repeal of the Corn-laws—I am opposed to the present laws—but I am in favour of a fixed duty." What advance do we make towards a settlement of this great question by this vague declaration? What advance can we make unless the amount of that fixed duty be stated. And yet we are called upon to go into committee in complete ignorance of the views of the advocates for fixed duty—in the hope, I suppose, that under the guidance of Mr. Bernal, we shall be inspired with that sagacity which is denied to us while the Speaker is in the Chair. If her Majesty's Government have made up their mind to the imposition of a fixed duty, why do they not state the amount of it to the House? Why do they not explain the principle and the calculations upon which it is to be founded? You invite us (addressing the Treasury Bench) to go into Committee on the application of an hon. Member, to whose views you are altogether opposed. The President of the Board of Trade, who I presume to be your organ on this occasion, says, "Let us go into Committee, and we shall have so many various plans, that we cannot fail to find one which will suit us. The smallest contribution will be thankfully received." Was it ever known on such an important question as this, one so engrossing to the public mind, so exciting to a large class of the population of the country, that a Government should propose to us to go into a Committee, rejecting the opinions of the Member who proposes it—and withholding from us the slightest indication of the course they mean to take in that Committee? I could have understood them had they said, "This question is of paramount importance, and it must be settled, we therefore come on the authority of a united Cabinet, and settle it we will." I could have understood them, if, on the other hand, they had declared, that there was no prospect of the settlement of the present question, that they looked upon continued agitation on the Corn-laws to be a great national evil, that it was their wish to calm rather than disturb the country, and that they would not therefore enter into a fishing committee, that they would not bait with delusion, in the hope of catching a Corn-bill. This course, also, I could have understood; but the course taken by the Government is inconsistent with its duty and authority; it prolongs agitation without affording the prospect of settlement. No doubt a Committee on the Corn-laws is a necessary form, before any practical measure could be proceeded with. But it is a mere form. Whoever advises it, should have made some advance towards the solution of the great difficulties which environ the consideration of the question, What is the amount of fixed protecting duty to which the agriculture of this country is entitled? He must have revolved in his mind, whether on the same principle on which a protecting duty on import is imposed—there ought not to be a corresponding drawback on the export of British corn—not a bounty—but a drawback, equivalent to those special burdens upon agriculture, to countervail which the import duty would be imposed. He must well have considered, whether the indiscriminate admission of foreign corn at a fixed duty, to be determined irrevocably beforehand, might not in very productive seasons at home and abroad, pour into our markets such a glut of foreign produce, as completely to derange all agricultural speculations. Above all he must have considered, how the fixed duty is to be maintained in the seasons of deficient supply, and threatened famine—whether it is to be enforced at all hazards—whether it is to be relaxed under certain circumstances, and if so, by what authority, and on what conditions it shall be relaxed, and, after relaxation, reimposed. But these are considerations, if not subordinate, still subsequent to the fixing of the amount of the fixed duty. By what rule shall that amount be determined? I have read all that has been written by the gravest authorities on political economy on the subject of rent, wages, taxes, tithes, the various elements in short, which constitute or affect the price of agricultural produce. Far be it from me to depreciate that noble science which is conversant with the laws that regulate the production of wealth, and seeks to make human industry most conducive to human comfort and enjoyment. But I must, at the same time, confess, with all respect for that science and its brightest luminaries, that they have failed to throw light on the obscure and intricate question of the nature and amount of those special burdens upon agriculture which entitle it to protection from foreign competition; and I not only do not find in their lucubrations any solution of the difficulties, but I find the difficulties greatly increased by the conflict of authorities. After reading Adam Smith's doctrine concerning the rent of land, I find that Mr. Ricardo pronounces it erroneous, and that he totally differs from Adam Smith, as to rent forming one of the component parts of the price of raw produce. Adam Smith thinks, that the value of gold estimated in corn will be highest in rich countries; Mr. Ricardo, on the other hand, that it will be low in rich, and high in poor countries. Mr. M'Culloch discusses the question whether there are any peculiar burdens on agriculture. He observes that tithes, land tax, poor and other rates, are said to be such; and says as to tithes:—

> "Two different opinions have been advanced. Dr. Smith contends, that tithes are paid out of rent, and have no influence on the price of corn. Mr. Ricardo contends, that the amount of tithe occasions an equivalent rise in the price of corn."

Mr. M'Culloch declares, that neither the one opinion nor the other is perfectly correct. I turn to the acute and valuable work of Colonel Torrens, treating expressly on the foreign corn trade, and the protection of home produce, and hope to find some reconcilement of the differences of those who had preceded him—some preponderance, at least, of agreement which may lead to a safe conclusion. But, alas! I learn from Colonel Torrens,

> "That Adam Smith is fundamentally wrong in stating that corn has a real value which is always equal to the quantity of labour which it can maintain."

Perhaps Colonel Torrens harmonises with the French economists. Far from it. He says:—

> "That the doctrine of the French economists, as to the degree in which the cost of food influences the value of the manufactured article, is fundamentally erroneous, and cannot, in any possible state, be conformable to fact."

Does he concur with Mr. Ricardo, or Mr. M'Culloch, or Mr. Malthus? Quite the reverse. He says:—

> "Mr. Ricardo and his followers are quite wrong as to the doctrine of rent. That it is self-evident that Mr. M'Culloch cannot be right, in the opinion that the value of the farmer's capital rises in the same proportion with the value of the raw produce he brings to market. Not content with one refutation, he gives a second of the doctrine of Mr. Malthus, that the labourer is benefited by the high value of the articles composing wages."

The very heads of Colonel Torrens's chapters are enough to fill with dismay the bewildered inquirer after truth. They are literally these:—

> "Erroneous views of Adam Smith respecting the value of corn.
>
> "Erroneous doctrine of the French economists respecting the value of raw produce.
>
> "Errors of Mr. Ricardo and his followers on the subject of rent.
>
> "Error of Mr. Malthus respecting the nature of rent.
>
> "Refutation of the doctrines of Mr. Malthus respecting the wages of labour."

Perplexed by these conflicting authorities, finding, as we proceed, our path more intricate and obscure, we turn for relief to her Majesty's Government, in the hope that from the eminence on which they are placed they will be able, by their superior sagacity to illuminate the darkness and unravel the intricacies of our ways. But we turn in vain. They give us no comfortable assurances. The light they have, if any there be, they studiously withhold from us. They invite us to follow them, and yet they are the very men who have warned us to distrust the guides to whom they would commit us. Can we forget the letter of the noble Lord (Lord John Russell), addressed to his constituents, cautioning them against the party—

> "Who wish to substitute the corn of Poland and Russia for our own; who care not for the difference between an agricultural and manufacturing population in all that concerns morals, order, national strength, and national tranquillity; with whom wealth is the only object of speculation, and who have no more sensibility for the sufferings of a people than a general has for the loss of men wearied by his operations."

The noble Lord admits the letter, but claims for himself the privilege of changing his opinion. I concede it to him in the fullest extent; but then the noble Lord always contrives to leave upon record so terse, so epigrammatic, so admirable a vindication of his old opinions, that he makes it difficult for his admirers to follow him at once in the adoption of the new ones. The noble Lord in his speech last night referred to an anecdote told of the great ornament of English art (Sir Joshua Reynolds), who after reviewing the productions of his earlier years, turned away from them with a candid expression of disappointment, that as life advanced, he had improved upon them in so slight a degree; and the noble Lord congratulated himself that he should escape, by timely change of opinion, the mortification of a similar avowal. Now the lapse of time may have given to the noble Lord more comprehensive views as a statesman, it may have matured his powers as a debater—but his lot as a painter is unquestionably the same with that of the great head of his profession. The graphic fidelity of his earlier sketches will never be surpassed, and when he reviews the gallery in which they are arranged he must turn away from the contemplation of them with the mortifying confession that the pencil of his maturer years has produced nothing to compare with them. Whatever be the department of art which he has selected, whether historical, when he vindicates the Revolution of 1688, and justifies ths Somers's and the Russells for their hatred of papal intrigue and influence—whether fanciful, when in defence of Old Sarum, he likens the Reformer to the foolish servant in the story of Aladdin, who deceived by the cry of "new lamps for old," exchanged the "old lamp with magical powers for the burnished and tinsel article of modern manufacture;"—whether in the humbler department of portrait he sketches the political economist. [Mr. *Hume*, Oh! oh!] I am not surprised at the interruption, for you sat for the likeness, for the faithful resemblance of the harsh, cold-blooded economist regarding money as the only element of national happiness, feasting his eyes upon Poland in the back-ground able even "with her wretched ploughs, and wretched men and wretched horses" to drive us from the cultivation of inferior soils. No, Sir, the noble Lord has produced nothing since so happy as these vigorous and spirited designs—and when he now invites us to follow a political economist, can he be surprised if we are haunted by the recollection of the portrait which he himself drew, and the warning which he gave us to beware of trusting the original? If her Majesty's Government, on their responsibility as a Government, with a distinct declaration of their principles, and a full explanation of their views, were to call upon us to reconsider the Corn-laws and to remove the obstacle to the importation of foreign corn, we should be placed in a different position from that in which we now stand. Even then, while we might respect their motives, and the manliness of their course, we should pause. We should tell them there were higher considerations involved, than those of mercantile profit. We should doubt the policy of making this great country more dependent than it is on foreign supplies. Admitting that the extension of intercourse, by the reciprocation of benefits and the sense of common interests is a great guarantee for peace, still we should not implicitly rely on its efficacy. We should remember that within our own short experience the insane ambition of a single man, bent upon our destruction, had for many years overruled all the impediments which the love of gain, or the prosecution of peaceful industry among millions of men, could offer to his reckless course. We should find, even in the present state of the world, in North America, in Spain, in the Gulf of Mexico, ample proof that the interests and the influence of commerce will not always ensure the peaceful arbitration of differences. Could you prove to us that the true principles of mercantile dealing required us to purchase corn in the cheapest market, and to withdraw the capital which has fertilized the inferior soils of this country, for the purpose of applying it to the rich but unprofitable wastes of Poland—still we should hesitate. We should remember with pain the cheerful smiling prospects which were thus to be obscured. We should view with regret cultivation receding from the hill-top, which it has climbed under the influence of protection, and from which it surveys with joy the progress of successful toil. If you convinced us that your most sanguine hopes would be realized—that this country would become the great workshop of the world—would blight through the cheapness of food, and the demand for foreign corn, the manufacturing industry of every other country—would present the dull succession of enormous manufacturing towns connected by railways, intersecting the abandoned tracts which it was no longer profitable to cultivate—we should not forget, admid all these presages of complete happiness, that it has been under the influence of protection to agriculture continued for two hundred years, that the fen has been drained, the wild heath reclaimed, the health of a whole people improved, their life prolonged, and all this not at the expence of manufacturing prosperity, but concurrently with its wonderful advancement. If you had called on us to abandon this protection with all the authority of an united administration, with the exhibition of superior sagacity, and triumphant reasoning, we should have been deaf to your appeal; but when, inviting us to follow you, you present nothing but distracted councils, conflicting colleagues, statements of facts not to be reconciled, and arguments leading to opposite conclusions, then we peremptorily refuse to surrender our judgments to your guidance, and to throw the protection secured to agriculture by the existing law into the lottery of legislation, in the faint hope that we might by chance draw the prize of a better Corn Bill.

Mr. *Brotherton* said, amidst much clamour for a division or an adjournment, that as only one member from the manufacturing districts had addressed the House he hoped he should be allowed to say a few words. He could assure the House that he rose with great diffidence to reply to some of the observations of the right hon. Baronet, the Member for Tamworth. The right hon. Baronet had urged as a proof that the manufacturers of Manchester were well off, that the exports had increased, and that the deposits in the Savings' Banks had increased. He did not deny that the deposits had increased, because although the masters had had little or no profit, the wages of the operatives had not, that he was aware of, been reduced. He held in his hand a statement shewing the quantity of cotton twist exported in each year, from 1815 to 1838, the declared value in each year, the average price per pound, the price of the raw cotton, and the amount left for wages, profit and expenses; also the price of wheat in this country as compared with the price of wheat at Dantzig. This table would shew the House how the manufacturers had been treated as compared with the agriculturists. The hon. Member read the table as follows:—*

From this statement it appeared that, in 1815, 9,244,547 pounds of cotton twist were exported, that the declared value was 1,781,077*l.*, the average price, per pound, 3*s.* 10*d.*; the price of the raw cotton 1*s.* 9*d.*, and that there remained for wages, capital, expences, and profit 2*s.* 1*d.* per pound. The price of wheat being, at that time 63*s.* 8*d.* per quarter. In 1838 there were 113,753,197 pounds of twist exported, the declared value being 7,430,582*l.*, the price per lb. was 1*s.* 3¾*d.*; the price of the raw cotton 9½*d.*, leaving only 6¼*d.* per lb. for labour, expenses, capital and profit for the artizan, spinner, and merchant. Going through the statement, it would be found that while exports had increased in quantity, the amount to cover wages for labour and profit had gradually decreased. In 1815 the amount was 2*s.* 1*d.* per lb.; in 1820 it was lessened to 1*s.* 4¾*d.*; in 1830 it was reduced to 8*d.*, and in 1838 to 6¼*d.*, the average price of corn being 64*s.* 7*d.* per quarter. In the profits of manufactured goods similar reductions had taken place. A piece of calico, which was worth in 1815, 19*s.* 8¾*d.* was in 1836 only worth 6*s.* In 1820 we exported

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* See Table, following page.

248,370,630 yards of cotton goods, averaging 12¾*d.* per yard, the declared value being 13,193,529*l.* In 1836, 637,667,627 yards were exported, averaging 6½*d.* per yard, the declared value being 17,183,167*l.* Now, if the spinner had had the same amount per pound for labour and profit in 1838 that he had in 1815, he would have received in round numbers 6,000,000*l.* more than he did receive. And if the prices of manufactured goods in 1836 had been the same as in 1820, the extra amount received by the manufacturers would have been upwards of 16,000,000*l.* sterling. But what was the fact with regard to agriculture? The average price of wheat before the war, from 1780 to 1790 was 45*s.* 9*d.* per quarter, during the war it was upwards of 80*s.*, and since 1815 the average might have been a little below 60*s.* per quarter. Agricultural improvements had increased the produce very considerably, rents had been doubled since 1790, and the price of corn in France, on an average of twenty years, had been fifty per cent. lower than in England. Thus, notwithstanding all the improvements in agriculture, prices had been kept up, but all the improvements in machinery had been used, not for the benefit of those engaged in manufactures, but transferred to other parties, prices being continually reduced to meet foreign competition. The consequences of this depreciation had been, that agriculturists now received three pieces of calico instead of one for the same quantity of food, our operatives in factories had been compelled to work long hours in order to compete with foreigners, our machinery was exported in large quantities, artizans were leaving the country, and if the Corn-laws were not repealed our manufacturers would transfer their capital to other

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* Cotton Twist and Yarn exported from Great Britain to Foreign Countries.

Years.	Lbs.	Declared value.	Average per lb.	Price of Cotton.	For Capital Labour and Profit per lb.	Price of Wheat per qr.	Price of Wheat per qr. at Dantzic.
		£.					
1814	13,534,003	2,907,276	4 3¾	2 3	2 0¾	72 1	47 5
1815	9,241,547	1,781,077	3 10	1 9	2 1	63 8	46 1
1816	16,362,782	2,707,384	3 3¾	1 8	1 7¾	76 2	57 4
1817	13,732,679	2,131,629	3 1	1 8	1 5	94 0	75 8
1818	14,743,675	2,395,305	3 3	1 9	1 6	83 8	64 7
1819	18,085,410	2,519,782	2 9½	1 2	1 7½	72 3	43 9
1820	23,032,325	2,826,639	2 5¾	1 1	1 4¾	65 10	33 3
1821	21,526,369	2,305,830	2 1¾	0 11	1 2¾	54 5	31 7
1822	26,595,468	2,697,589	2 0¼	0 10	1 2¼	43 6	29 1
1823	27,378,986	2,625,946	1 11	0 9	1 2	61 9	26 8
1824	33,605,510	3,135,396	1 10¼	0 9	1 1¼	62 0	22 9
1825	32,641,604	3,206,729	1 11	1 0	0 11	66 6	23 3
1826	42,179,521	3,491,268	1 8	0 9	0 11	56 4	23 1
1827	44,878,774	3,545,575	1 6¾	0 7¾	0 11	55 0	22 5
1828	50,505,751	3,595,405	1 5	0 7	0 10	60 5	24 4
1829	61,441,251	3,976,874	1 3¼	0 7	0 8½	66 3	36 10
1830	64,645,342	4,133,741	1 3¼	0 7½	0 8	64 3	34 4
1831	63,821,440	3,975,019	1 2¾	0 7	0 7¾	66 4	37 3
1832	75,667,150	4,722,759	1 2¾	0 8	0 6¾	58 8	37 7
1833	70,626,161	4,704,024	1 3¾	0 10	0 5¾	52 11	29 4
1834	76,478,468	5,211,115	1 4¼	0 10	0 6¼	46 2	23 5
1835	83,214,198	5,706,589	1 4¼	0 11	0 5¼	39 4	23 1
1836	88,199,046	6,120,366	1 4½	0 11	0 5½	48 6	
1837	105,106,529	6,955,942	1 3¾	0 8	0 7¾	55 10	
1838	113,753,197	7,430,582	1 3¾	0 9½	0 6¼	64 7	

countries, and the land-owners would be left to pay the national debt, and to support the poor, who by mistaken policy would be deprived of employment.

Mr *Fielden* moved the adjournment of the Debate to Monday.

The original question and the amendment were put amidst loud cries of "go on!" "divide!" and "adjourn!"

Lord *John Russell* said, that he certainly did hope that the House would be able to come to a decision upon this question to night; and he really knew not why the debate should not continue, if the House would only listen with patience to those hon. Members who might wish to address any observations to their consideration. At all events, he must say, without reference to this question in particular, that the postponing the debate to Monday would be of the greatest possible inconvenience to the public service, and he could not possibly consent to such a course in the present state of the votes of the House. Seeing, therefore, no difficulty in proceeding with the debate this evening, and that the hour was not too late to admit of that being done, and also that the subject had already been debated during four nights, he hoped that the House would not consent to another adjournment.

Mr. *Fielden* was understood to say, that by the regulations of the House, any Member had a right to express his opinions upon any particular subject under discussion, and he had not hitherto had an opportunity of addressing the House. It was said, that the adjournment to Monday would interrupt the course of public business, but he knew no other question so important for the country as that now before the House, and he thought that the proper settlement of it would be of the greatest importance for the prosperity and happiness, or the misery of the country. Therefore it was that he proposed that the debate should be adjourned; but, at the same time, if it would be more convenient for the noble Lord, he would postpone the day of its coming under consideration to Tuesday. He thought the debate ought to be adjourned, and he would divide the House upon the question.

Mr. *W. S. O'Brien* rose amidst the greatest confusion, and was not heard for several minutes. He said, that although he was not one of those who desired that the debate should be adjourned, yet he thought that it would appear very singular that, while the people of Ireland were most especially interested in the subject of the discussion, only one Irish Member had been permitted to address the House in reference to it. He was anxious to take this opportunity of letting it be understood in Ireland that many of the Representatives of that country had, like him, been attending in their seats in that House during the four nights' debate, with a view to express their opinions, but in vain. He knew that it would be useless for him, on such an occasion as the present, and at this hour of the night, to attempt to proceed, and he, therefore, entered his protest against this, he would say, contempt of the country to which he belonged.

After some confusion the House divided on the question of adjournment:—Ayes 61; Noes 475—Majority 414.

Mr. Ewart moved that the debate be adjourned to Monday.

Lord *John Russell* thought that the House was ready to come to a decision that night. They had already discussed the subject for four nights, and if hon. Members were anxious to address the House, he had no doubt but that it would listen attentively to their observations. He hoped, however, that the House would agree to come to a decision that night.

After a brief discussion, the House again divided on the question of adjourning to Tuesday:—Ayes 53; Noes 373.

Mr. Fielden moved, that the debate be adjourned to Wednesday next.

It was finally settled, after some confusion, one hon. Member proposing to adjourn the debate for six months, that the debate should be adjourned to Monday.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Monday, March 18, 1839.

MINUTES.] Petitions presented. By the Duke of RICHMOND, the Earls of MOUNTCASHEL, STANHOPE, SHAFRESBURY, *and* HADDINGTON, Viscount STRANGFORD, and Lord REDESDALE, from a number of places, against the Repeal of the Corn-laws.—By the Earl of ROSEBERY, from Ross, against Church Extension in Scotland.—By the Marquess of ANGLESEY, from Amlwch, against the appropriation of any of the Revenues arising out of the Union of the Bishoprics of Bangor and St. Asaph's for Amending Bishoprics in England.—By the Duke of CLEVELAND, from a Poor-law Union in the North, and by Viscount GAGE, from another Union in Oxfordshire, for an Alteration in the Bastardy Clauses of the New Poor-laws.—By Lord BROUGHAM, from Glasgow, against

Church Extension in Scotland.—By the Duke of ARGYLE, Earls of ERROL, and HADDINGTON, and the Marquess of BUTE, from several places, in favour of Church Extension in Scotland.—By the Earl of FALMOUTH, from Cornwall, against the Beer-laws.

CORN-LAWS.—GLASGOW PETITION.] Lord *Brougham*, in presenting a Petition from Congleton, in favour of the total repeal of the Corn-laws, said, that he had carefully read it for the purpose of not falling into any error in stating its contents.* He had heard that some gallant officer did not like a French general who was opposed to him, because he would never allow him to sleep even with one eye, and he was in the same situation with regard to his noble Friend (the Duke of Richmond), who was unfortunately his opponent on the subject of the Corn-laws; still, however, he ought to apologise to their Lordships for a mis-statement of facts which occurred the other evening, and which the acuteness of his noble Friend had discovered. But in truth his noble Friend was unconsciously the cause of the error; for his noble Friend presented the other evening a numerously signed petition from Glasgow, and had described it as proceeding from a respectable body there in favour of the Corn-laws, which looked considerably against his statement. In consequence, however, of what had fallen from his noble Friend, he was waited upon the next day by Mr. Sturge, Mr. Walmesley, and by two gentlemen from Glasgow, who stated, to show that there was no ground for supposing that the opinion of Glasgow was unfavourable to the repeal, there was a petition signed by 43,000 inhabitants in its favour. When he came down to the House at five o'clock, one of the officers put into his hands a petition from Glasgow; he immediately put the two things together, and having no idea that Glasgow, great and important as it was, was so prolific of petitions with more than 40,000 signatures, as to send two on different subjects, signed by so numerous a body, he concluded that this was the petition referred to, instead of being, as it really turned out, a petition against Church Extension in Scotland. Still he owed the apology he now made to their Lordships for the mistake.

The Duke of *Richmond* was most happy in having detected the noble and learned Lord's error.

Earl *Stanhope* could not help remarking that after the error that had so recently occurred it might so happen that out of the many petitions presented by the noble and learned Lord against negro slavery, there might have been some against white slavery, or perchance, some against the new Poor-law Bill.

Lord *Brougham* would not have the noble Earl lay the flattering unction to his soul that any of the petitions had been against the Poor-law Bill. It was impossible that he could have made a mistake, for he had never, except in the last instance, presented a petition which he had not examined, of which the substance had not been extracted, and the subject matter marked on the back, generally by himself. So that the petition was first examined to make the abstract, secondly it was read by him to the House, and thirdly it was read by the clerk at the table, who would have returned it if he had made any mistake. And, so far from the noble Earl's supposition being correct, he had, on the contrary, presented many petitions in favour of the Poor-law Act, from many highly respectable persons, and men of sound judgment.

CHURCH EXTENSION.] Lord *Brougham* had now read the petition from Glasgow to which he had before referred, and he found that it was a petition on a most important subject. No wonder that he had thought it was signed by 42,000, for so he would have judged by the bulk, and on a reference to its contents he found that it had actually 40,587 names appended to it.

The Duke of *Richmond:* If the noble Lord had read the outside of the petition he would have seen that it related to Church Extension.

Lord *Brougham* did not like superficial knowledge. If he read at all he liked to open the book itself. The petition urged their Lordships strongly not to give any further grant or endowment to the Scotch church, and they prayed also for a separation between Church and State; it was agreed to at a public meeting held at the Grey Friars' church in Glasgow, on the 12th February, 1839. In presenting this petition he must express his satisfaction at the declaration lately made by the noble Viscount at the head of her Majesty's Government upon this point.

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* The noble Lord by mistake on the previous Friday, presented a petition from Glasgow, describing it to be against the Corn-laws, which, when examined by the Duke of Richmond, turned out to be a petition for Church Extension (Scotland).

The Earl of *Aberdeen* could not conceive that the declaration attributed to the head of her Majesty's Government —that they would not propose any grant during the present Session, and after the termination of the labours of the commission appointed by themselves—could be correct, or that no pledge had been given to do so; for unless the noble Lord held different language in that House and out of it, nay more, unless he held different language sitting from what he did standing, there was a pledge that funds to a certain amount, the noble Lord knew to what he alluded, should be applied.

Viscount *Melbourne* said, that the Government had not at present come to the determination of making any proposition on the subject.

PARDONS IN IRELAND.] The Marquess of *Westmeath* wished to call the attention of the noble Marquess opposite to the fact, that on the last occasion on which he drew the attention of the House to Irish affairs, he stated that the noble Marquess had liberated a criminal from the gaol of Westmeath without requiring bail from him, and that the noble Marquess had on that occasion roundly contradicted him. He had since written to Ireland under an impression, that his original information was true, requesting to be furnished with the best information on the subject, and he now had received confirmatory evidence, namely, a copy of the letter of Mr. Drummond, secretary to the noble Marquess, dated Dublin Castle, December 11, 1837, in which he communicated his Excellency's commands to the gaoler, that Thomas Cook, confined in the gaol of Mullingar, should be discharged from custody; and he was discharged without bail. He could not now help expressing his astonishment at the noble Marquess's contradiction, and at the same time of stating, that in his opinion such a course of proceeding was not calculated to facilitate public business.

The Marquess of *Normanby* said, he did not see anything so extraordinary in the step he had been taking. On the occasion to which the noble Marquess referred, he spoke from a minute in his own handwriting, which he then held in his hand, expressive both of his intention and of what he did, which was, that if the man should behave himself well for two months, he should then be discharged on giving security. He did behave well, and in a petition presented to him at the expiration of that period, he stated that he was prepared to give security, himself in 20*l.* and two others in 10*l.* each. He had made a minute from which he spoke, in his own handwriting, that the man should be discharged on giving security. Whether any inadvertence had subsequently taken place in making the ultimate order, he could not say, but he had never known an instance in which such an order to take security had not been attended to, although, as the noble Marquess seemed so certain, that there had been an omission here, he could not take upon himself to say there really had not been. He had however, given orders, that his sureties should be taken, and his opinion was, that his order had been complied with.

WEST INDIA LABOURERS.] Lord *Seaford* wished to ask the noble Marquess, another question, on a different subject, whether her Majesty's Government had received any communications from Sir Lionel Smith, relative to the working of the free labourers in Jamaica, besides those already on the Table? He put the question at the request of a very numerous meeting which had been convened on the subject, conceiving that the House ought to be in possession of the fullest information from all parties. He trusted, that his noble Friend, if he had received any more communications, would make no objection to their production. He wished also to know whether the noble Marquess had any objection to produce any communications he had received from the agent of Jamaica.

The Marquess of *Normanby* replied, that there was every intention on the part of the Colonial office to give as full information as they were competent to afford relative to the working of the free system in Jamaica. Whether Sir Lionel Smith had received any information other than that which had been laid on the Table, he (the Marquess of Normanby) could not tell, but if he had he had not communicated it to the Colonial office, and should the office receive any further communications from the stipendiary magistrates or other persons, they should be laid on the Table of the House. He had no objection to put the House in possession of every information relating to the House; he could not, however, have included the statement of the agent for Jamaica in the papers already produced; but if the noble Lord would move for it, he had not the slightest reason for opposing the motion.

Earl *St. Vincent* said, that if they were to consider this subject, it was most important that the true state of the island should be known? The statement laid on the Table could not be confided in; it was made *ex parte*, and if the Colonial office gave credit to it they would be led into error. When the subject came before them, then it would require the exercise of their utmost wisdom and discretion.

The communication from the agent of Jamaica ordered to be laid on the Table.

War in the East.] The Earl of *Aberdeen* was anxious to ask the noble Lord at the head of her Majesty's Government whether, when the papers were presented and printed, the noble Viscount would make any statement explanatory of the war we were engaged in]in the East, or whether there was any other information to be presented to the House?

Viscount *Melbourne* replied, that there was considerable additional information to lay on the Table of the House on the subject, but that he would not make any statement until the whole information was before their Lordships.

Lord *Ellenborough* inquired whether the noble Viscount would make any motion on the production of the papers?

Viscount *Melbourne*: No. He had not stated that he would make any motion, but he would make a statement when the whole of the papers were before the House.

Glasgow Cotton Spinners.] Lord *Brougham* presented a petition from the cotton spinners who were convicted a year and a-half ago of an illegal combination. It would be recollected that owing, not to his learned friend, the Lord Advocate, but to the blundering of some other persons, the parties had been kept in prison a long time before trial. They had now been nearly two years in prison, and the last year was in the hulks, and they complained of the hardships they had suffered. If the men had been convicted a few miles south of Glasgow, and under the laws of England, they would have only been liable to three months' imprisonment, and they prayed their Lordships, as the highest court of judicature, to interfere in their behalf. If mercy were extended to them they would acknowledge that they owed their release to the clemency of the executive; and he would take upon himself to say, that he was satisfied, from the anxious inquiries of persons who had seen and conversed with the convicts, that if they were released, nothing whatever would be done by their friends or advocates to make unseemly or unbefitting expressions; and nothing but gratitude for the mercy that had been bestowed.

Petition laid on the table.

Poor-Laws.] Earl *Stanhope* was desirous of calling the attention of their Lordships to a petition which he held in his hand, which was one of great importance and worthy of their Lordships' attention, as it offered another example, although it might be considered superfluous, of the tender mercies dispensed by the three dictators at Somerset-house, under the New Poor-law Act. It was the petition of John Berry, a labourer, of the Union of Worksop, but residing in the Union of Ecclesall, Bierlow. The petitioner was a native of the parish of St. John, now in the Union of Worksop, and had long resided in the county of Nottingham. He was born in the year 1748, so that his life was already extended beyond the usual period of human existence; and, therefore, he (Earl Stanhope) would ask, upon that statement alone, if no legal provision had ever existed in this country for the relief of the poor, and if the statute of Elizabeth had never been passed, whether a person who during a considerable number of years had maintained himself and family, and shared in the public burdens, had not an undoubted right to demand assistance and support from this country? It appeared that for nearly fifty years the petitioner had been a housekeeper, and that he had regularly paid poor-rates, and never had been chargeable to the parish until of late years. So that not only by a natural right, but by a positive statute, he was entitled to claim relief, of which he and others, in similar circumstances, had been violently dispossessed. Yes, he would say violently dispossessed, without the opportunity and advantage of being heard in their own defence, of that relief by what was falsely called an assembly of the representatives of the people. The petitioner had now attained the age of 91 years, and of course it could not be expected, even by the Poor-Law Commissioners themselves, that he was able to earn his living by his own labour; nor could any flaw be found in his character as to industry and sobriety. It appeared that from the time he had become chargeable to the parish until the enactment of that most monstrous measure of iniquity and oppression, the new Poor-law, he received the small stipend of 4*s*. per week for the support of himself and wife, 2*s*. of which they had to pay every week for rent; so that all this poor couple had to subsist upon was just no more than 1*s*. each per week. But even this miserable pittance, insignificant as it was, appeared too large to the guardians of the union, who, he supposed, found themselves obliged to act under the arbitrary commands of the three dictators of Somerset-house. The result was, that 2*s*. were withdrawn from the weekly allowance of this aged couple, and having to pay rent to that amount, they had nothing left for subsistence. When they ventured to remonstrate with the guardians against this reduction, their claim for a restoration of the former allowance was refused, and they were told that any further application would render them altogether destitute of relief, for the whole should be withheld. What was the consequence? The goods of this unfortunate and venerable man were seized for rent, and would have been wrested from him, had it not been for a benevolent friend, who interposed and rendered him the necessary assistance. Looking to the moral and religious character and conduct of the petitioner, considering that he had spent a long life in industry, and had proved himself a useful and valuable member of society, he would ask, whether he should not be relieved from penury in his old age, and allowed to spend the remainder of his days in his own home? He would read to their Lordships two or three passages from the petition itself. It stated, "That your petitioner, though very infirm, is very grateful for the many mercies he has received." In speaking of "mercies" their Lordships would understand that the petitioner meant the mercies of Providence, and not the mercies of the New Poor-law. But the petitioner "hopes that he and his aged wife may be permitted to remain and die where now all that they are attached to in this world are resident. He had always understood, that having paid poor-rates during full fifty years, he would be entitled to a maintenance in his old age; that coarser food than bread and water," alluding, he supposed, to the diet, which had been praised in that House by a noble Earl—"that coarser food than bread and water would not be his portion; that, being a free born Englishman, unaccused of any crime, he should not be cast into prison; that being a Christian"—and he begged the attention of their Lordships to this part of the petition—"accustomed regularly to worship God on the Sabbath-day in his holy temple, he should not be debarred from so doing while he had strength and inclination so to do; that after having lived so long happily and affectionately with his wife, he never looked forward to the time when, in violation of the commands of God, they might, unaccused, be put asunder in different prisons, while at their death their bodies might be given to surgeons to be dissected; that your petitioner, understanding that these and many other (as he conceives) unjust hardships, and even some worse, may be inflicted on him and others in similar situations by officers till now unknown in this country, while the long-enjoyed right of appeal to neighbouring magistrates against the oppression is taken away from them, most humbly solicits your right hon. House that the good, well-understood, poor-laws may be restored to this his long-loved, long-enjoyed, native country, and your petitioner, for the very short period now remaining of a long life, will, as in duty bound, gratefully pray.—JOHN BERRY."

Lord *Ellenborough* said, he could not help thinking that there was a great deal of misunderstanding respecting the case adverted to by his noble Friend. Upon one point, undoubtedly, there was a decided mistake. The relief of individual cases was not under the direction of the Board of Commissioners at Somerset-house; it depended entirely on the local boards of guardians; and therefore, whatever errors might be committed, it rested entirely with the board of guardians. He apprehended that inquiry would throw a very different light on this case. There could be no doubt that if this petitioner and his wife had nothing but what they received from the board of guardians, it was not enough. But he could not help thinking that it would be found they had relatives somewhere who were able to support them, and that what was given by the board of guardians was given in aid of such support. He had no doubt that a case like the present would receive every consideration from any board of guardians, because he trusted that feelings of humanity were prevalent among those gentlemen of which they were generally composed. He wished the noble Earl would make a little more inquiry into the matter.

Earl *Stanhope* said, if he had read the petition at length, the noble Baron would have found that this needy person had no relatives whatever, although he might receive casual aid from benevolent individuals. He was so entirely ignorant of the Poor-laws as not to know that the Commissioners were not immediately engaged in dispensing relief; but he knew that the boards of guardians were compelled to act in conformity with the general directions which were issued from Somerset-house.

Lord *Brougham* hoped the noble Earl would have no objection to have the petition copied, and a copy sent to the three dictators at Somerset-house, as the noble Earl called them. It was but fair that they should know the contents of the petition. He would say for those three most worthy, honourable, and respectable individuals, who had a most painful, laborious, and difficult duty to exercise, that he never heard one case brought forward in which they did not anxiously court inquiry. In fact, they had even gone out of their way, notwithstanding the amount of their ordinary business, to prosecute inquiry themselves.

Earl *Stanhope* said, those three worthy, hon. and most respectable persons, as the noble and learned Lord had called them, seemed to work like moles in the dark, for the newspapers were filled with cases that excited horror and indignation in the public mind, but they never condescended to say, whether they inquired into them, or what was the result of any inquiry they made. They could not be unacquainted with the case of the petitioner.

Lord *Brougham* recommended the noble Earl to give notice of a motion for bringing forward all the cases he pleased, with the names, and he would then undertake to meet the noble Earl as he met him last year. It did so happen, that having met him last year, he did not find him so ready to come on this year. He could not tell the reason of that.

Earl *Stanhope* said, he could assure the noble and learned Lord, that if he wished him to produce individual cases, he should be ready to do so; but he feared that the House would not be so ready to go into them. He thought there were cases enough to occupy a whole week in merely stating their respective facts. Perhaps his better course would be to move, if the noble Lord opposite had no objection, for a return of any correspondence which had taken place with respect to cases A, B, C, and so on, naming the cases.

Lord *Brougham*.—If you name the cases I have no objection.

Earl *Stanhope* said, he would do so, if he could be certain of a full and fair inquiry. There had already been an inquiry into some cases before a committee. But what he wanted to see was an inquiry conducted as a case was conducted before a jury in a court of law, which would insure a fair decision. What had happened in the committee of last year? According to the opinion of the committee on four of the papers which came under the investigation, nothing was wrong; but he had given his reasons for dissenting altogether from that opinion. Then with regard to the Bridgewater case, that had not been investigated; the inquiry had commenced, but was "broken off in the middle, like the story of the bear and fiddle." The Suffolk cases were every one of them most clearly proved. No doubt could be entertained of the truth of those cases. But the investigation was conducted in a manner that could not by possibility give satisfaction to this country. He could not with propriety decline serving on that committee, inasmuch as he was one of the defendants, having produced one of the cases which was the subject of inquiry. What was the manner of conducting that investigation? The moment any witness expressed an opinion which was unfavourable to the New Poor Law, he was assailed on all sides; some questions were put to him to confound him, others to confute him; and others had not for their object the investigation of truth, not to discover whether the fact was true or false, but neither more nor less than to make the witness believe, that he was greatly mistaken in his opinion. He wished the investigation had been conducted as inquiries were in a court of law; then the whole of the cases, not excepting the Bridgewater case, would have been proved. If the course which had been pursued was intended to gain time, or to cast oil on the troubled waves, it might have succeeded, but that was all it had accomplished, or could accomplish.

Lord *Wharncliffe* must complain of the manner in which the noble Earl had spoken of the committee, because, although the Bridgewater case was not finished, the other four cases were entirely heard. It did so happen that the length of the evidence on the Bridgewater case drove them so far into the Session that the committee found they could not get through it. He thought he had a right to ask what his noble Friend meant by stating that attempts were made to confute, or confound witnesses. It was the duty of witnesses to state facts, and in order to get at facts witnesses must undergo an operation which was not very pleasant, but they underwent the same in the courts of law—they must be cross-examined. In courts of law witnesses were very closely examined and cross-examined, and he was bound to say that his noble Friend had no right to complain of the conduct of the committee. Indeed, he was quite sure, that if the witnesses who gave information, or really had information to give, were asked the question they would not say, that they were not treated fairly by that committee. With respect to the petition, which happened to come from a place not far from his own residence, he was quite sure, from his knowledge of the union to which the man appeared to belong, that it was impossible he could be treated with injustice. The Chairman of the union was the Duke of Portland. Any man who knew that noble Duke must be ready to admit that he was the last man likely to do anything unjust or partial in any degree to any individual. But the truth was, that there was a considerable departure at times from the rule, that no relief should be given out of the union workhouses. It appeared, however, that the union had refused to relieve this man. But there must be some particular reason for that refusal, and he thought it would have been courteous if the noble Earl had communicated with the Duke of Portland. It appeared from the petition, that, after the man had applied to the union, a neighbouring gentleman wrote to the Duke of Portland on the subject, and that the letter was laid before the board, who passed a resolution—"That the case should not be taken into consideration." Now, there must have been some reason for taking that course; and, as his noble Friend had made this charge against the Worksop Union, it would have been only courteous and just to have made the noble Chairman acquainted with his intentions.

Earl *Stanhope* had not condemned the investigation of the committee on his own authority. He rested on the evidence itself. Notwithstanding what had been stated, he would maintain, that during the investigation it was attempted to confute the witnesses rather than elicit truth, and he must say, that the examinations were the most pettifogging he could conceive.

The Duke of *Richmond* had seen nothing during the examinations which was not strictly correct. Committees of the House of Lords ought, however, he thought, to object to witnesses saying, "Somebody told me this or that." The way was to bring that somebody before the committee, and not record mere hearsay evidence. In regard to the case which had been brought forward by the noble Earl, it ought to be recollected that under the old system it was not competent for the overseers to order relief out of the parishes, while under the new system relief might be ordered out of the parish, provided the locality was within the union. Under the old system, therefore, matters as regarded the petitioner would have been worse than under the New Poor-law.

Petition laid on the Table.

CORN-LAWS (IRELAND).] The Earl of *Mountcashell* presented a petition from the County of Cork against any alteration of the Corn-laws. As he had not had an opportunity of expressing his sentiments on this important subject on a former evening, he trusted their Lordships would permit him to make a few observations in regard to the effects which he conceived a repeal of the Corn-laws would produce as respected Ireland. Ireland would, in his opinion, be the greatest sufferer by a repeal of the Corn-laws, because Ireland was not a manufacturing country, and was dependent almost entirely upon agriculture. If sufficient remuneration were not afforded to the growers of corn in Ireland, a great number of farms would be laid down in grass, and the people would, in consequence, suffer severely, as they would not be able to export such a quantity of agricultural produce as they had hitherto done. But a large portion of land would inevitably be thrown out of cultivation altogether, and the effect of such a step would be to throw a large number of labourers out of employment, and in Ireland the difficulty of obtaining work was very great. The land, too, being turned into pasture, the price of potatoes would increase, and as potatoes were the chief means of subsistence of the poor, the labourer, while he had less employment, would also be less able to provide for himself and family, because of the increase in the price of provisions. But that was not all, for if a number of labourers were thrown out of employment, the price of labour would be reduced by the competition which would take place, so that while there was little employment, and while provisions were at a high price, their means of obtaining the necessaries of life would at the same time be greatly diminished. He had little hesitation in saying, that the effect of a repeal of the Corn-laws would be to reduce the already low price of labour in Ireland by 3*d.* or 4*d.* per day. Their Lordships were aware of the advantages which the poor in Ireland derived from the rearing of pigs, but if the quantity of potatoes raised was diminished on account of the number of farms turned into grass, and if the price of all other kinds of agricultural produce were increased,—and such would be the effects of a repeal of the system of Corn-laws,—it would be no longer possible for the poor to rear the same quantity of pigs as before, and they would suffer very severely in consequence. It was, however, argued, that the landlords must reduce their rents; but those who knew anything of Ireland must be well aware of the difficulties in the way of such a step. A great number of the Irish estates were heavily encumbered, and the landlords had to maintain their families, to pay the interest of mortgages and debts, so that in many cases a reduction of rents would be attended with very great hardship. In his opinion a repeal of the Corn-laws would cause some degree of suffering to the landlords; but the farmers would suffer still more, and the labourers and poor most of all. Such, in his opinion, would be the effects of the repeal as regarded Ireland. With respect to England, he thought the manufacturers themselves would ultimately suffer more from a repeal of the Corn-laws than the landlords or farmers. It was allowed that the home market was by far the most valuable for the manufacturers, and who were the purchasers in the home market? In the home-market the landlords, farmers, and labourers, were the chief consumers, and if the income of the landlords, farmers, and labourers were diminished, it would be impossible they could continue to consume the same quantity of manufactures as they did at present. It was impossible they could do so; and it was clear, that in proportion as their means were diminished, the less would they consume of the manufacturing produce of the country. It was plain, therefore, that although the agriculturists would suffer in the first place, the manufacturers would ultimately suffer, and more severely. A repeal of the Corn-laws would, he was persuaded, be ruinous to the country. It was calculated that the landed property of the United Kingdom was worth 3,258,000,000*l.*, and if the Corn-laws were repealed, and the rents diminished but one third, what would be the effect as regarded property? In such a case the value of the whole landed property would be reduced one-third,—that is, the value of the land would be reduced by upwards of 1,000,000,000*l.*, or 200,000,000*l.*, more than the amount of the national debt. He begged their Lordships to consider what the effect of such a reduction would be on the national debt. A great number of foreigners had invested their capital in the English funds, and if the value of the land were diminished to such an extent, would not a question arise with those foreigners whether their security was not so greatly decreased as to make it prudent for them to sell out? And what would be the effect of such a step? The inevitable consequence would be a large fall in the price of stock, so that the English capitalists would suffer severely. But there was another point of view in which the question ought to be considered. A repeal of the Corn-laws would diminish the consumption of all articles on which Customs and Excise were levied, and the consequence would be a falling-off in the national revenue, and Ministers would have nothing to pay off the interest of the debt, and support the various institutions of the State. For these reasons he could not but think, that the repeal of the Corn-laws would be a measure equally impolitic and ill-advised. If there was not enough of corn raised in this country, he wished they would give some encouragement to our American colonies; and if the duty were considerably reduced, and colonial corn admitted, such a course would be of the greatest advantage to Canada.

Petition laid on the Table.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Friday, March 18, 1839.

MINUTES.] Bill. Read a first time:—Drainage of Lands. Petitions presented. By Messrs. G. EVANS, LOCKHART, JONES, PEASE, BLENNERHASSET, Lords G. LENNOX, MAHON, and Captain EGERTON, from a number of places, against the Repeal of the Corn-laws.—By Mr. LUCAS, from Ulster, for permitting Presbyterian Soldiers to attend their own Chapels.—By Lord A. LENNOX, from Chichester, against the Ecclesiastical Duties and Revenues Bill.—By Alderman THOMPSON, from the city of London, against the Metropolitan Police Bill.—By Mr. BAINES, from the West Riding of York, by Mr. W. PATTEN, from Lancaster, and by Lord JOHN RUSSELL, from Stroud, against the existing Beer Laws.—By Sir G. STRICKLAND, from the West Riding of Yorkshire, in favour of the Local Courts Bill.—By Mr. SMITH O'BRIEN, from two places, for the full benefits of the Union to Ireland.—By Mr. M. PHILIPS, from Manchester, against the Highways Bill.—By Colonel PERCEVAL, from Roscommon, against any Grant for National Education in Ireland.—By Mr. GOULBURN, from Cambridge, against the Ecclesiastical Duties and Revenues Bill.—By Mr. WALLACE, from Edinburgh, and a place in Fife, for Mr. R. Hill's plan of a Uniform Penny Postage.—By Mr. F. TRENCH, from Connaught, for establishing Railways in that Province.

ENVOY TO PERSIA.] Sir *James Graham* desired to ask some questions of the noble Lord, the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, with regard to our British relations in the East. He desired to know, first, whether Mr. M'Neill, the envoy or chargé d'affaires at the court of Persia, had returned to this country, and whether he had left any person to fill the situation which he had quitted?

Viscount *Palmerston* said, that Mr. M'Neill had applied for permission to come home on account of ill health, in the course of last year, and that permission had been given to him to do so whenever the state of the public service might enable him to quit the post of which he was in charge. When the state of the discussion with the Persian government led him to think, that it was his duty to retire from the Persian territory, he took all the members of the British mission with him, leaving Colonel Sheil however, the secretary to the commission. The latter officer was instructed to wait for any communication which might reach him from the Persian government, and to transmit it immediately to the English Government, and there to remain until he should receive instructions. The chargé d'affaires was therefore in a condition to carry on any communication which might be commenced in reference to our friendly alliance with Persia.

Sir *James Graham,* in continuation of his first question, begged to inquire of the noble Secretary for Foreign Affairs, whether there was any minister or chargé d'affaires at the court of Persia at this time.

Viscount *Palmerston* said, that there was no person now in that position. Mr. M'Neill, he had already stated, had, in consequence of what had taken place, not thought fit to give notice, that he should retire from the territory, and the chargé d'affaires would not return without instructions from the Government.

STATE OF THE NAVY.] On the motion that the order of the day for the House going into a Committee of supply, be read,

Mr. *T. Attwood* rose and said, that he was convinced, that the present supply of men for the army was insufficient; but he believed, that there was a much greater deficiency in the supply of men for the navy, and it was his intention to take the sense of the House upon the question, whether the House should not recommend the Committee of supply to reconsider the vote of 34,165 men for the navy; for he was convinced, that when the number of boys, artisans, and marines were taken away, the 23,000 men left for the real naval service must be insufficient. When he looked at the state of the Russian navy, and at the state of the navies of France and America, and when he considered the state of our foreign relations generally, he thought the House would agree with him in opinion, that it was fit and proper, that the vote should be rescinded. It was a most serious subject, and in the course of a few months it might be too late to rectify the error which was about to be committed. A very small matter in Persia, or in Canada, or in the

Mediterranean, would give rise to affairs such as Navarino, and involve us in conflicts with Russia. For instance, if by any accident Sir Pulteney Malcolm had attacked the Russian fleet in the Black Sea, it would have led to an attack on England by the Russian fleet in the Baltic. We had no naval force sufficient to repel such an attack. He did not desire to see the navy augmented at the expense of the army; on the contrary, he thought the army was much too small. But, at any sacrifice, we ought to put our navy in such a state as would render it the defence of the country. We ought at any rate to have a fleet competent to beat the Russians if necessary. There were 30,000 of the best English sailors in the American navy, and he would have every one of them back again. But it was said, "how will you get them?" Why, pay them better than the Americans pay them. But where were they to get gold? Look at mortgage rentals and the funds. The Russians, those barbarians, those second Danes, if they came, the hon. Member for Kilkenny would say "buy them off" [Mr. *Hume:* No.] We bought off the Danes ten or twenty times, and the oftener we bought them off the more of them came. He wished the safety and honour of England to be protected. What, when they gave twenty millions to the negroes, could they not afford five millions to British sailors. Could not our pension laws be altered? Could not our navy be made equally advantageous to that of the United States for sailors? Why did they not make the royal navy of England the most attractive service in the world. The honour of it was greater than any other country in the world, and the national pride of every Englishman was, thank God, not yet gone. If twenty more line of battle ships were fitted out — fully manned, not half manned—he should be content. Looking to the whole circumstances of the navy of the country, he felt it to be his duty to move, that it be an instruction to the Committee to reconsider the vote of 34,160 seamen and marines, and to enquire whether it would not be advantageous, in the present state of the country, considering its foreign relations, to make an immediate and considerable increase?

The *Speaker:* Who seconds the motion?

Mr. *Attwood:* I suppose some honest man will second it.

Sir *John Tyrrell* seconded the motion.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* objected to the motion, as instructing the Committee to do what it was not in its power to do. A Committee of supply could reduce, but it was inconsistent with parliamentary or constitutional usages for it to increase a vote proposed by the Crown.

Mr. *T. Attwood:* I do not propose more money; I only propose more men.

Sir *R. Peel* said, that if the hon. Member for Birmingham had confined his motion to an instruction to the Committee to reconsider their vote, he could then have raised an argument; but having proposed, in addition, that the Committee should enquire into the expediency of an increase of the number of men, he came at once within the restriction imposed by parliamentary usage. It was, he conceived, most important, both in practice and in principle, that the House should not have the power to increase a vote proposed by the Crown. The question involved a great constitutional principle. Once establish the practice of increasing particular votes, and the same thing would be done with all the estimates. The result would be a general adoption of this indirect mode of increasing the expense of the public establishments. He did not mean to controvert the arguments and statements of the hon. Gentleman; but on the constitutional principle he had adverted to, he objected to the course proposed to be pursued.

Mr. *Attwood* certainly would not wish the motion to be negatived, because out of doors that would look like defeat. He believed that there was scarcely a Member of that House who did not think that the navy ought to be increased. He had no objection to withdraw the motion and bring it on another time.

Motion withdrawn.

SUPPLY.—ARMY AND NAVY ESTIMATES.] The House went into Committe of supply. On the motion of Lord *Howick* a vote of 89,000 men for the service of the army, exclusive of 20,000 for the East-India service, was agreed to. A vote of 3,000,000*l.* on account of the estimate of 3,451,000*l.*, for the maintenance of the military establishment of the country was also agreed to, as also a vote of 500,000*l.* on account (as we understood) of the estimates for army half-pay and pensions.

Mr. *C. Wood* said, in pursuance of the arrangement come to at the close of the debate of Friday night, he would now proceed to move certain of the navy estimates that were absolutely necessary for the public service. In order to leave room for discussion on a future occasion, he would leave a portion of the money, and move for the greater part on this occasion. The whole sum required for the navy half-pay, pensions, and allowance due on the 1st of April, was 782,000*l.*; he would move for a sum on account.

The money was voted and the House resumed.

CORN-LAWS.—ADJOURNED DEBATE, FIFTH NIGHT.] Mr. *Fielden* said, he should vote for the Committee, but wished previously to state the grounds of his vote. The state of our manufactures was such as rendered it necessary that those engaged in carrying them on should have corn at as low a price as it would fall to, without any protecting law; and that the malt-tax, the hop-tax, and all other taxes and duties on the necessaries of life, consumed by the labouring people, should be repealed, and an equitable assessment on property substituted. He proposed this for the relief of the manufacturers, and to prevent the growers of corn from being placed in a worse position than they would be if the Corn-laws were repealed. He thought every encouragement should be given to agriculture, and that the growth of corn should be increased at home, so as to make us an exporting instead of an importing country, for he was opposed to making this country the workshop of the world, and to the people leaving the land to go into the factories, to an employment not so healthy, more uncertain, and where it is possible, by new inventions in machinery, they could not be long employed. Ten persons could now, in the manufacturing establishment with which he was connected, produce as much clothing as 100 persons could produce forty years ago. This was within his experience, and if he went to a little more remote period the difference would be much greater. He was decidedly opposed to those with whom he should vote who were for having us more dependent on foreigners than we were for a supply of corn. It would be a dangerous position to place ourselves, in, and he would illustrate this danger by a fact arising out of impediments now disturbing the supply of cotton to this country. The American bankers have, as it would seem to enhance its price, made advances to the cotton planters on their crops, and engaged to keep the cotton from the market, or at any rate, from being sold until their object is attained; for, by a Liverpool broker's circular, of the 15th instant, he found that the import of American cotton into the port of Liverpool up to that period this year is only 118,145 bales, whereas up to the same time last year it was 278,236 bales; that is more by 135 per cent., and the price has risen within a few months 25 per cent. Substitute corn for cotton, and imagine, with a deficient harvest at home, what an extremely dangerous state the people of this country would have been placed in. But if individuals can thus impede supplies, what might governments do to effect some great political object? Had not the stock of cotton in the kingdom on the 31st December last (321,000 bales) been larger than at the close of any year since 1828, the inconvenience would have been more severely felt than it has been; for instance, had it been only 185,000 bales, as it was in 1834, the cotton factories would have come to a stand; for he found that the estimated stock in Liverpool on the 15th instant is stated in the same circular to be only 219,000 bales, and the consumption is increased since that year about 50 per cent. As this bears upon the increase of steam power, which has been much disputed in this House, and also is one reason of the business of manufacturing cotton being carried on at a loss to those engaged in it, and also creates an undeniable necessity for shorter hours of work, he would state what the increase of steam power had been, according to a return given in to the Poor-law Committee by Dr. Kay in August last. From January or July, 1835, to the time the return was delivered into the Committee, this return states that within that period steam engines to the extent of 14,647-horse power had been erected, or were erecting, mostly the former, in Manchester and twenty-five towns in its vicinity, and their immediate neighbourhoods, all of them for spinning and manufacturing cotton. By a return made to the House by the factory inspectors, early in 1835, the number of horses' power of steam engines employed in the cotton manufacture in the United Kingdom is stated to be 27,317½; the addition, then, of steam power in this period of less than four years is shewn to be 53 per cent., and that, too, exclusive of the addition in Scotland and other parts of the kingdom, which would most likely make the increase of steam power in this period for the cotton manufacture only 60 per cent. This increased power of production, far surpassing any increase that has taken place in the means of consumption, as stated in the circular to bankers of the 8th instant, was an alarming fact, and indicates a state of difficulty and embarrassment among those engaged in manufactures, which had done much to create the agitation that has arisen for a total repeal of the Corn-laws, and which would probably be continued until that object was accomplished. This state of things had been produced by the pressure of the debt and the unbearable taxation the country groans under, which it was curious, too, was alleged as a reason for continuing entire the present law restricting the importation of corn. The manufacturers have strained every means to bear up and overcome the pressure of this taxation. The increase of consumption of cotton since 1815 had been enormous; in that year it was 80 millions of pounds weight; in 1838 it was 416 millions of pounds; and they received a less sum of money for working up the 400 millions than they did for manufacturing the 80 million pounds. He had proved before the Committee on manufactures, shipping, and commerce, in 1833, that up to that period a decline in price had been progressively going on in articles which constituted a fair criterion of the cotton manufacture, and that in 1832 those engaged in it had 70 per cent. less for manufacturing the same sort of yarn and goods than they had in 1815. He now found that this decline had increased to 75 per cent., and this accounted for the stoppage of the mills, some altogether, and others working only three or four days a week. For all this there was a csuse. The Bill of 1819, enacting a return to cash payments, without adjusting public and private contracts, the tamperings with the currency since that period, the legal tender clause enacted in the renewal of the Bank Charter in 1833, and the increase of joint stock banks, had all tended to produce the present alarming state of things. The number of joint stock banks established in England and Wales between 1826, when the Act of Incorporation was passed, and April, 1833, was only 30; whereas 76 additional joint stock banks had been opened between April, 1833, and the end of the year 1837; and although the legal tender clause enacted in the Bank Charter Act of 1833 did not go into effect until August, 1834, yet in 1836 a panic set in, by the Bank of England protecting itself and drawing in its issues, which had caused the downfall of many, and from which revulsion we had not yet begun to recover. To repeal the Corn-laws without accompanying the repeal with other measures would only add to the evil. If wheat, in consequence, fall from *56s. 3d.*, the average of the last nine years, to *45s.*, as assumed by the hon. Member for London, the 54 millions now raised by taxation, would, after this fall of price, buy as much wheat as 67½ millions would have purchased at the average price of the last nine years. This would not be fair; it would, to that extent, be another Peel's bill, which must undergo revision before we get into a healthy state. All the owners of fixed money incomes arising from mortgages, bonds, and other securities would derive similar advantages from the repeal of the Corn-laws, while those engaged in agriculture would be injured, and those engaged in manufactures would not be relieved to any extent, though many of them may think they would. To repeal the Corn-laws without concomitant measures, would, therefore, be class legislation of a most mischievous character, which the hon. Member for London condemned. With a repeal of the Corn-laws should go a repeal of the Excise and Custom-house duties on the necessaries of life, and an equitable assessment on property should be enacted for raising the taxation, that could not be dispensed with. This done, the repeal of the Corn-laws would not impede the advance of agriculture, and the poor and their employers would be placed in a better condition; and if this were not done no one could foresee what might happen. Mr. Heathfield, of this city, has just published a pamphlet, containing an argument for the general relief of the country from taxation, and eventually from the Corn-laws, by an assessment of property; it was sold for 2*d*., and is well worth the perusal and consideration of hon. Members. He did not agree with all put forth in that pamphlet, but it proposed the introduction of a change for the benefit of the humbler classes, which must be obtained in some way. This House had legislated for the rich, and against the poor, for seven Sessions he had sat in that House. It was always wise to attend to the petitions of the poor, and protect them against being oppressed by the wealthy; and if this were not done; if this House does not adopt the opposite course of legislation it has for a long time persevered in, a state of things is at hand which will make the stoutest hearts in this House tremble at the prospect. The signs of the times should not be disregarded. This Corn-law question will not be set at rest by the vote of this night; it will be again and again urged on the House; you cannot convince the people, they should have low wages, and a high price of corn, and he would, therefore, vote for going into Committee.

Mr. *W. S. O'Brien*, did not see, that any advantage would result from the repeal of the Corn-laws, sufficient to counterbalance the sacrifice of the agricultural interest. Looking to the vast extent and fertility of the corn countries, he believed, that any quantity of wheat, that might be required could be imported into Great Britain, at a price ranging from 40*s*. to 45*s*. a quarter. The hon. Member for London had contended, that not more than 1,000,000 quarters would be imported under a free trade, but he (Mr. O'Brien) could not adopt that opinion. He recollected, that to supply the deficiency of the harvest of 1830, alone, not less than 4,000,000 quarters had been required. He expected, that at least 5,000,000 quarters would now be imported, and that a fall of prices to the extent of 25 per cent. would ensue. If the protecting duty on corn were abolished, the duties on the importation of cattle, butter, cheese, and other articles of agricultural produce must also be repealed. To the consumers, to the mortgagees, fundholders, and creditors, of every description, such a state of things would be very advantageous. Were the landlords an entirely encumbered class, then, he thought, they would have had, contrary to what hon. Gentlemen seemed generally to suppose, less interest in the settlement of this question than either the tenants or the labourers; but the landlords were an unencumbered class, and the effect of repealing those laws, would be, to give what you took from them to another, and a non-producing class. Also, as everybody admitted, a number of acres would be thrown out of cultivation, and the consequence of this would be the consolidation of farms, by the operation of which a large amount of capital would be drawn away from agriculture, and removed, perhaps, to the colonies. But this system of consolidation was already working many evils and much human suffering in Ireland, which he was certainly not prepared to increase. Of the crimes which appalled this country, nine out of ten arose from the ejectment of tenants for this purpose. There was another class whom he considered would be the most materially affected of any—viz., all those persons who held a beneficial interest in land. In Ireland great numbers lived upon a profit rent (after paying a heavy chief rent, to the first owner of the soil) which had been bequeathed to them; and if their income were reduced 20 or 25 per cent., they would be totally ruined. He was not prepared to inflict that ruin. If the labourer, again, were able to get other employment, after having been thrown out of agricultural employment, it might be different; but it was impossible to hold out a prospect of this. The hon. Member for Sheffield had drawn a picture of the destitute condition of a hand loom weaver. He could multiply that picture by thousands and ten thousands. From the state of the agricultural labourer, he was convinced, that 100,000 of his countrymen would be thrown out of employment if the Corn-laws were repealed. Now, it ought to be remembered, that with the present feelings of the Irish peasant, he had no Poor-law to resort to, no emigration was provided for him, no manufacturing towns were ready to receive him. He, for one, was not prepared to set on foot so great an amount of human misery. He admitted, that the repeal would reduce wages, and that so the manufacturers would be enabled to compete with foreigners in neutral markets, and that foreigners might take our manufactures in return for their grain; but he thought it not certain the manufacturers would not in the mean time lose the home market. But, however this might be, it seemed to be admitted, that the manufacturing workman would gain nothing. Setting, then, the advantages against the evils, he confessed he thought the balance preponderated in favour of the maintenance of the principle of protection; the question of the degree and manner of that protection ought, in his opinion, to be perfectly open; but he did think that some such modification of the present system was desirable as would prevent the recurrence of the present high prices. And first of all he thought that colonial grain ought to be admitted free of all duty; indeed, rather than not advance colonization by every means, he would agree to a bounty; and finally he would so alter the present system as to substitute a permanent and fixed protective duty. He held this to be a question of protection or no protection. If a fixed duty were to be agreed on he could not consent to less than a duty of 12*s*. He could not give his vote satisfactorily unless he had had an opportunity of stating what his views were, and having done that as briefly as he could, he should sit down by declaring that he should vote against the motion.

Sir *J. T. Tyrrell* thought the hon. Member for Wolverhampton had shown his discretion in proposing that this question should be heard by counsel and witnesses at the bar, because he was quite sure much new light would have been introduced into the question by the professional advisers; whereas it was quite clear that, as it was, very little new light had been introduced into the subject. The hon. Member's proposal went to pass the deepest censure on the Members representing manufacturing districts, as if they had not shown themselves capable of discussing this question without counsel. He called the proposal for a fixed duty a miserable one, because after all that had been stated by the noble Lord, the Member for Stroud, who, so far as regarded a fixed duty, must be considered as representing the opinions of the government, that measure had only in the first instance been supported by a solitary petition, and since then by only four other petitions. It was quite clear, after the opinions which had been shown by the hundreds of petitions which had been presented, that no government would be able to maintain anything like a fixed duty in a time of scarcity; it would be a grievous oppression to the commerce of this country if they were to do so. Those Gentlemen who spoke in that House the sentiments of the manufacturers, had a great advantage in being represented by the President of the Board of Trade. He happened to have read a Manchester newspaper, which stated that, five or six years ago the right hon. Member had gone to the Chamber of Commerce, in Manchester, and had made a speech there on the subject of the Corn-laws, five hours and a-half long, but ever since he had preserved a solemn silence on the question. He should have expected him to have stated what his opinions were. He should always respect the hon. Member for Kendal, for the honourable and handsome testimony he had borne to the prosperity of trade at present. He remembered very well stating, after he had heard the hon. Member make the speech, that next morning, after the account had been read, the hon. Member for Kendal would be tossed in a blanket in Palace Yard, and probably thrown over into the Thames. He was happy, however, to learn a less severe punishment had awaited him. After a four nights' debate, and thirty-four hours had been consumed in considering the question, the hon. Member who had last sat down was only the second Irish Member who had spoken on the subject. A question had been asked the other night, what would become of Ireland in this debate, and it was stated that there was little chance of Ireland being neglected any more than Scotland. Seeing the hon. Member for Dublin in his place, he hoped the hon. Member would state his views. The hon. Member for Dublin had stated elsewhere, that the peculiar charms of this question were, that though it would be a great blow to the people of Ireland, it would draw the eye-teeth of the aristocracy. He coincided in the opinion expressed in a pamphlet by Lord Western, that if the Corn-laws were repealed it would be the most cruel blow that was ever struck by a body of overwhelming capitalists against their poorer fellow subjects. The hon. Member for the Tower Hamlets stated, that he wished to see this country, with reference to the production of corn, in the worst possible state of dependance. He, on the other hand, maintained, that the object and the principle of the law was to have plenty, and security for that plenty. He would not weary the House by attempting to touch on other grounds. Gentlemen had read long extracts, and cast up figures *usque ad nauseam.* But when they recollected that there were about 150 articles protected by taxes which the farmer could not obtain without paying that protecting duty, it surely was not too much to protect the farmer's produce from foreign competition. He contended that, if there were a moderate fixed duty, it would throw the trade open chiefly to large capitalists, and on that ground he objected to it. They were as much in the dark on the general question on the fifth night of the debate as on the first night.

Mr. *G. W. Wood* would not detain the House with going into any details on the general question, exhausted as it was by the many nights of debate there had been upon it. But there were some statements in the speech of the right hon. Baronet, on Friday, to which he wished to call the attention of the House, and also respectfully to call the attention of the right hon. Baronet. He knew not to what cause he had to attribute it, but on the only two occasions on which he had ventured to address the House that session, he had been honoured on both occasions with the especial notice of the right hon. Baronet. The right hon. Baronet had been pleased to compliment him on the honesty of a former speech, which he (Mr. Wood) had made respecting the exports. The right hon. Baronet had stated that his statements were founded on truth; that the documents had been laid on the table, and that the House had substantiated the truth of those statements. He felt especially desirous of guarding himself from being supposed to go along with the right hon. Baronet in what he conceived to be the most unfounded statements. The right hon. Baronet had expressed a hope that Gentlemen on that (the Ministerial) side of the House, would take into their hands a printed document of the Board of Trade. That paper he had now in his hands: and one of the statements alluded to by the right hon. Baronet was the statement of the exports of British produce and manufactures of the united kingdom, being an account of the exports in the year ending the 5th of January, 1839, compared with the exports of the preceding years—they were in fact the exports for the years 1837 and 1838; and from a comparison of these two years the right hon. Baronet had deduced that this country was in a higher state of prosperity than it ever before experienced. The right hon. Baronet had told them with evident satisfaction and considerable emphasis that this table exhibited an increase of seven millions in the amount of the exports, the exports of 1837 being over thirty-six millions, while those of 1838 were over forty-three millions. He (Mr. Wood) did not quarrel with this statement, excepting that the right hon. Baronet had concealed the important circumstance that the year 1837 was one of great commercial embarrassment and extreme depression. There had been in that year an entire derangement of the industry of the country, a stoppage of a large part of its trade, and a diversion of a portion of its capital into new channels. It could not have escaped the right hon. Baronet's recollection that there were peculiar circumstances attending the state of commerce in 1837. The derangement of the money market in London, and of the exchanges with America, had spread its baneful influence to every commercial establishment throughout the world. It was in order to show, that there had been a comparative restoration of prosperity from that extraordinary depression that he had made his statements on a former occasion, and from them he was not disposed to shrink. But the right hon. Baronet, in using those statements in order to draw his own comparison, ought to have been candid enough to tell the House the peculiar circumstances of 1837. With the leave of the House he (Mr. Wood) would supply the deficiency. It was true, that the exports of the year 1838 exhibited an increase over those of the year 1837, of about seven millions sterling; but the exports of 1837 exhibited a decrease of no less than ten millions compared with those of the preceding year. The consequence was that the right hon. Baronet's boasted increase of seven millions in 1838, was, in fact, a diminution of upwards of three millions from 1836. After the conclusions which the right hon. Baronet had drawn from these circumstances, and by which he had given the House to understand that he had entirely demolished the first ground on which the commercial petitioners claimed the attention of the House, the right hon. Baronet proceeded to attack the second ground. It had been alleged by the manufacturers that the increase of exports which had taken place, was not an increase of manufactured products, but of raw material, or of commodities partially wrought up. The right hon. Baronet had attempted to meet this in the same way, by comparisons of the same years, and evidently supposed that he had demolished this argument also. In the statement which he (Mr. Wood) had taken the liberty of making on the first night of the Session, he had taken what appeared to him a fair view of this subject. He had compared the exports of 1838, not with a solitary year, but with the average of four preceding years, and told the House fairly what the condition of trade was in 1838. But not having made the distinction between manufactured and partially wrought fabrics and raw materials which was thought important by the petitioners, he was assailed on the ground that his statements were calculated to lead to a delusive opinion. On a subsequent night, therefore, he took the liberty of again addressing the House to supply the omission, and gave the statements which fully bore out the case of the petitioners, that there was a much larger increase in the exports of raw material, and of partially wrought material, than in those of perfectly wrought fabrics. To these statements the right hon. Baronet had made no allusion whatever. He hoped that the House would excuse him for refreshing their recollection on the subject. He found that comparing the average of the four years with the year 1838, the exports of woollen, cotton, linen, and silk cloth had increased from 25,757,000*l.* to 26,190,000*l.* showing an increase of 433,000*l.*, or 1 7-10 per cent. on the perfectly wrought fabrics. Comparing the same average with the same year, he found that the exports of cotton yarn, woollen yarn, and linen yarn had increased from 6,599,000*l.* to 8,452,000*l.*, showing an increase on the article of yarn, exported, to be wrought up, in foreign countries of 1,852,000*l.* or twenty-eight per cent. Thus while cloth had increased 1 7-10ths per cent., yarn had increased twenty-eight per cent. The next articles were coal, hardware, earthenware, and glass, on which there was a deficiency of 334,000*l.*, or eleven and a half per cent., while the metal—the raw material—had increased 956,000*l.*, or twenty-four per cent. In refined sugar, a manufactured commodity though it did give very large employment, had fallen off. There had been a falling-off of 180,000*l.*, amount to fifty-five per cent., whilst raw materials, sheeps' wool, and coal had increased 395,000*l.*, or fifty-three per cent. He certainly thought these statements fully made out the case of the petitioners. He would leave hon. Gentlemen who chose to go into the question, to draw such conclusions from them as they might, but these were the facts, and he conceived them to be of importance. He had no wish to occupy the time of the House or to follow the right hon. Baronet through his long speech. As to the evidence given by Mr. Birley and others before the East-India Committee, to show how far we could undersell the native manufacturer, he did sot see how it bore on the question now before the House, and he would not go into it. Considerable details had been gone into with a view of establishing the comfortable condition of the working-classes, by a reference to savings' banks. But the comparison of the right hon. Baronet did not justify any satisfactory conclusion on this head, because they were open to the same objections which lay against his comparisons of exports. He had compared 1838 with a year of extreme distress—1837. The hon. Baronet had stated also, that in 1837, when the exports were only thirty-six millions sterling, corn was cheaper than in 1838, when the exports had increased to forty-three millions. But here, again, the comparison was vitiated by the same cause; for no fair conclusion could possibly be drawn from a year in which commerce was entirely deranged. He (Mr. Wood) had no intention of going into the general question; but he thought it highly desirable that it should be settled when they had no clamours, and when they were able to discuss it as calmly as they could ever expect. The right hon. Baronet, however, had not thought these sufficient motives for taking the subject into consideration. If the manufacturers were in a state of decay, it would be indeed, as he understood the right hon. Baronet, the strongest argument that could be urged upon him for taking it into consideration, and examining whether some change might not be made in the law. But, if he waited until some great injury were done to manufactures, the opportunity of recovering their prosperity would be gone by. It was the part of a wise statesman to see difficulties in prospect, and to endeavour to avoid them by preparation and precaution, rather than to wait until they overwhelmed him. He felt persuaded that this question could not be allowed to remain in its present state. He was himself prepared to alter the existing law and to face the much dreaded measure of entire repeal. He believed that this country would be perfectly safe under a free trade in corn, and that the agricultural had no more reason to dread evil consequences from it than the manufacturers. In all that the right hon. Baronet had said there was nothing which gave him the impression that the right hon. Baronet was so attached to the present system as to consider that no circumstances could justify a change. He therefore hoped that the time would come when, under more favourable circumstances, they might have the benefit of the right hon. Baronet's assistance in bringing the question to a settlement.

Mr. *Benett* said, that, representing a great agricultural county, he considered it was his duty to express his sentiments on the present question. This attack on the Corn-laws had originated with the manufacturers, who, he would maintain, ought naturally to have expected that, under so long a period of peace in Europe, the manufactures of other countries would have increased. It was a hard case that they should now come forward and attack the Corn-laws, which were by no means the cause of any distress they might be suffering. They said nothing about the reduction of wages, which a repeal of these laws would lead to. They stated their object was to raise wages; but they very well knew, and so did the labourers by this time, that their real object was to reduce wages. In short, the whole question was one of wages; for the manufacturers could only compete with foreigners by cheapness, and they could not bring about cheapness without a reduction of wages. Why were we to bolster up an unnatural state of manufactures? The political economists would drive their chariot along, heedless of what they might crush under its wheels. Their sole object was wealth—a thing than which, in his view as a legislator, the comfort of the great mass of our population was of far greater consideration. The great duty of the Legislature was, he contended, to look to the interests of the great mass of the community, and he would not consent to any measure which was inimical to the interests of that mass, which he believed to be the agricultural class. Hon. Members who advocated the repeal of the Corn-laws were not aware of the large mass of capital which had been sunk in the cultivation of poor lands. Did they now wish that all those lands should now be thrown out of cultivation, in order that cheaper corn might be obtained elsewhere? If they did, let them recollect, that not only would large sums of capital be lost, and large tracts of land lie useless, but that a vast number of agricultural labourers would be thrown out of employment. The question was, whether we should be importers or growers of corn. If we neglected the home growth and became importers, we should injure trade and commerce, which grew out of agriculture. If agriculture was injured, it would be impossible that manufactures could thrive; for the strength of our manufactures grew out of the cultivation of the land. He wished prosperity to the manufacturers as heartily as any man, but it should be in conjunction with that of the agriculturists; and he would advise them not to monopolize the profits of foreign countries as well as of their own, by destroying those of the landed interest. He maintained that independence was our chief duty, although the President of the Board of Trade had said it was too late to be independent, and insisted that if agriculture thrived manufactures would flourish simultaneously with it. He was willing, by any reasonable means, to encourage manufactures; but would oppose all attempts at doing so at the expense of the agricultural interest. These were his opinions, and he thought it right to express them. He wished the manufacturing interests of the country to prosper; but he did not think it just that they should monopolize all the advantages to themselves, and attain their prosperity by the destruction of the landed interest. He could go into figures; but he would not, as the House must be tired of such statements. He, however, could not help saying, that figure statements had been unfairly used in the course of the debate, and more especially by the right hon. Gentleman, the President of the Board of Trade, when speaking of the prices of wool. Now, what did the right hon. Gentleman do? Why, he did not take the wool generally, but limited himself to the Leicestershire wool; and if he had taken the South Down wool, he must have arrived at a very different result. The noble Lord, the Secretary of State for the Home Department, too, had not employed his figures fairly; but, without saying such statements were false, he did not hesitate to assert that they were fallacious. He certainly preferred a fluctuating to a fixed duty, and, looking at the matter dispassionately, he must say, that the fluctuating scale appeared to him to have worked admirably. If they had a fixed duty, say of ten shillings, or five shillings, or any other sum, he was convinced they would be pestered with petitions from Manchester and the Delegates sitting in Palace-yard to suspend it by an Order in Council; and, if he were called upon to decide between no protection and a fixed duty, he did not hesitate to say, that his vote should be in favour of no protection at all. He believed, that the present Corn-laws were nothing more than a just protection to the landed interest, and he should therefore vote against the present motion, because he thought it uncalled for, and that the farmers had a right to be secured in that fair return to which the expenditure of capital entitled them.

Mr. *O'Connell.* It is quite clear that there is an almost irresistible temptation to make long speeches on the Corn-laws, and for each speaker to repeat a great deal of what has been said before; and now I promise to the House two things, first, that I shall make but a short speech, and next, that I shall repeat as little of what has been already said as I possibly can. I must, however, refer to one thing which has been said respecting me by the hon. Baronet, the Member for Essex. He said, that in a speech of mine which had been printed I declared, that "Ireland would receive a strong blow from a repeal of the Corn-laws, but that I was content to support it, as it would draw the eye-teeth of the landed aristocracy." I believe that was the statement of the hon. Baronet. It only shows me that the hon. Baronet never read the report; he only read the paragraph in a newspaper; and there is this difference between the paragraph and the report, that the report is accurate, and the paragraph writer has distorted the sentiment I expressed as much as he pleased. I did not at all say, that the repeal of the Corn-laws would be a great blow—I said distinctly the reverse. I said, that I felt something like regret that the repeal of the Corn-laws would not be a disadvantage to Ireland, because it would be a feeling of pleasure when I was seeking for justice for Ireland from England, I should be happy to make a sacrifice on the part of Ireland to obtain justice for England. And then as to "the eye-teeth"—as to these symbols of wisdom, I can only say that I have not the least intention, I have not the smallest desire, of seeing them extracted from the landed aristocracy. Whatever be the value of "the eye teeth," I most willingly make a present of them to the hon. Baronet. I am for a repeal of the Corn-laws upon principle—I seek for their repeal upon principle: while the Corn-laws are sought to be supported, in order to give to the proprietors of land—to give to those who call themselves the landed interest, a superiority and an advantage over the other classes of the community. No one of any candour can deny it. What is it that you want to do? To get rich at the expense of others. Yes, you want to get more for your corn, for your oats, for your barley, your rye, and other grain, than they can be purchased for elsewhere; you want people to pay more for their bread than otherwise they would be obliged to do; and then you, even you! affect to say that you do not wish to make the aristocracy live at the expense of others. If that were not your object, why is it that you have been here for so many nights together, so strongly arrayed and so perfectly prepared, and so resolved upon battling for your monopoly. It is a remnant of the feudal system. Yes, for of the power and the monopoly formerly enjoyed by the aristocratical classes, this monopoly you have been still able to retain. What you want still to retain is the power of extracting a higher price for grain than that which it ought naturally to have. It is idle to attempt to disguise it. You want to make the poor pay duty for their bread—you want to prevent them obtaining it cheap—you want to prevent the poor creature who can now have but one slice of bread for a penny from obtaining two slices for a penny. Yes; and here you, high, mighty, and dignified, as you are—here you are struggling, night after night, to extort from the wretched, the miserable, and the orphan, a portion of their small crust—[*cheers.*] And you, too, cheer that. Yes; for if this did not produce you money, why should you so struggle for the Corn-laws? If it did not make, in your opinion, your estates more valuable, why so expose yourselves to public odium, or why place yourselves before the country as public extortioners? Would you place yourselves in that situation without some gain or profit to yourselves? [*No, no!*] The principle of the Corn-laws is this—to get more money for the landed proprietors out of the working classes. It is a principle that I repudiate—it is a principle that at once decides me to vote for a repeal of the Corn-laws. But there is another principle involved in this matter. It is the principle of free trade. I know that it has been denied, that a class who are calling for a free trade in corn, are not ready to give up the protection they may have for articles of commerce. Now, the delegates have passed an unanimous resolution, calling upon this House not only to repeal the Corn-laws, but also to remove every protection from the articles of manufactures. I would not be their advocate upon any other principle; for I am the advocate of free trade in every thing. I would let every man buy as cheap as he could the productions of this and every other country. Am I to be told that this would destroy your manufactures? If this be said, I reply, point out to me any country in which there is free trade, and that is the worse for it. I deny the assertion; and fortunately for this discussion, I find a report, laid on the Table last week, which illustrates my position. I insist that the elements of prosperity are to be found in a perfect freedom of trade. The principle of monopolies has found defenders in every period of our history. "The wisdom of our ancestors," as it is called, supported monopolies—what was the principle?—to rob each other to make the nation rich. How many heavy folios of volumes—how many hundreds of folios have been put together, proving that you ought to maintain the West-India monopoly? And yet you have repealed that monopoly. How many a stupid and lengthened speech was made in support of the monopolies of the reign of James 1st. and Charles 1st.? There have been at all times vindicators of monopolies; but the good sense of the country got rid of them. We have now a monopoly in corn and other produce of the soil. That, however, will soon fail, and the time will come when this prejudice will be at an end, and regarded like the by-gone notions of witches. Do we want an instance of what has been the effect of monopolies, and of the happy consequences of getting rid of them? We find both in a book published last week. I mean to take two instances, and, if you will permit me, I shall take the Papal States first. I believe no man will accuse me of being influenced by prejudice in speaking of the temporalities of that State. There is no government that can be more anxiously disposed for the benefit of its subjects, consisting of three millions of persons. It is impossible for any reigning principle to take a greater interest in the welfare of the people at large. The proof of that benevolence is exhibited by this fact, that more money is given in charitable works, in hospitals, and in feeding the poor, than in any other three of the European States, even including the benevolence of this most benevolent country. What then has been the conduct pursued in the protection of manufactures? They pay public money to aid their manufacturers, they give protecting duties, and they have prohibitory laws; and what is the result of all? It is thus stated:—

"On the whole it will be thought, that the above report, furnished by the Roman government, presents a melancholy picture of the manufacturing industry of that part of Italy. Many a town in Great Britain, consisting of only 30,000 souls, produces a greater quantity of manufactured articles than the three million inhabitants of the Pontifical States, notwithstanding the enormous sacrifices made by the Papal government, the protections, the prohibitions, the premiums given for the encouragement of what is called native industry. In Rome, as elsewhere, the measures taken to increase and improve manufacturing produce, have been the main causes of decline and decay. Premiums and protections have only served to reward and to render permanent the most rude and ignorant processes of manufacture; and prohibition, as far as it has succeeded, (and it has succeeded of course in the coarser and cheaper articles, which cannot pay the smugglers' profits)—prohibition has kept away those superior foreign manufactures whose presence would have compelled improvement in the home production. I visited some of the woollen manufactures, being the most important. Scarcely a valuable discovery had been introduced; the spinning in some cases by hand, in others by machinery—far behind the universal progress in England, Belgium, Prussia, or France; the looms, such as were generally employed in the fourteenth century, little better than those used by the Indians of the Deccan; the rowing and card-

> ing, all done by solitary workmen, and with the ancient teazels and handcards; the shearing with the antique hand-shears, such as have been employed from immemorial time; and in some places I saw the fulling performed by men half naked, employed to trample upon the cloth; a process, probably, not now to be found in any other part of the civilized world. How, then, can it be an object of wonder, if manufactures, instead of making progress, remain stationary, or fall into decay, while rival productions move forward in the career of constantly improving change?"

There then is the result of the working of a government of protection and of prohibition. There is the benefit derived from an extension of the principle of protection for the home manufacture, and prohibition to the foreign. But does any other State in Italy present a different picture? There is Tuscany; for there the principle of free trade has been acted upon for twenty-five years, and what is the result?

> "Twenty years of free trade have led to a vast extension of cultivation, a great increase of buildings and inhabitants both in town and country; to the establishment of new manufactories, to an enormous development of the growth of silk (a branch whose total destruction was foretold by the enemies of free trade), a very considerable augmentation in the consumption of both the necessaries and the luxuries of life, with all the enjoyments attached to them—a general rise of wages, and a universal sentiment of growing prosperity. The final and the most triumphant result in contrasting our present illimited liberty of commerce with the restrictive policy which preceded it, may be seen in undeniable facts. Our population is augmented in twenty-five years to the extent of 113,868 souls more than we had in 1766 (it was then 945,063). Our annual produce in corn is increased 3½ millions of staja (=337,600 quarters), the average production being, previously to the changes, 9,827,074, staja; the increase, therefore, is about thirty-four per cent.; our export trade in agricultural produce has increased to the amount of 3½ millions of Tuscan lire=116,670*l.* (about). Our ancient ruined cottages have been repaired, and a surprising number of new ones built. Epidemics have diminished by the consumption of better corn than that formerly issued from the public magazines. We have suffered little from rise of prices, which have soon regulated themselves, and have never undergone the enormous fluctuations to which they were formerly subjected. Property has been respected; monopoly overthrown; and the innumerable litigations which necessarily grow out of interference completely terminated."

Now then, contrast the one with the other. Sir, in effect of free trade behold the consequence of prohibition. If then, your proposition be good, you must go the full length with it. If you are for prohibition, you also declare yourself the supporter of that which tends to destruction. If you are for free trade, behold the consequences: "our ancient ruined cottages have been repaired," "epidemics have diminished;" and when I come to the later passage, I cannot but think of Ireland. During these debates we have had many proofs from Gentlemen on the other side, of their regard for Ireland. Even the hon. Baronet the Member for Essex, I think, said he was a friend to Ireland. If, indeed, he be a friend to Ireland, he has the oddest way possible of showing his affection upon other occasions. Ireland has in these debates many friends that will not condescend to aid her with their votes, when they could be of use to her; but now their kind wishes are like the story of the blessing, "they give them because they cost them nothing." I wish they would give to Ireland her political rights—I wish they would place us on the same footing with themselves. No, they will not do that; but when you want us to support your monopoly, you then wish, with your kind regards for Ireland, to drag us along with you. Does there live a man who ought to be more alive to the interest of the Irish people than I am. I am the hired servant of the people of Ireland, I am the only man in existence who is paid by a nation. Oh! governments pay; but I do not mean that. If, then, there be a man anxious for the prosperity of Ireland, ought not I to be the man? And remember, that if I desired to court the prejudices of the Irish people against my judgment and my conscience, ought I not to become in pretence, that which the hon. Member for Limerick is conscientiously, although not very consistently, the advocate of some kind of Corn-laws. You know too, that on a former occasion, when I found combinations amongst the working classes to exist in my native city, I stood forward and risked all my popularity in opposing the wrong, and exposing its iniquity. It is said, that the Corn-laws are a protection to Ireland. But what has Ireland to lose? It is said, that the Corn-laws keep up the wages of the Irish labourer but can any wages be less than theirs? Their labour is purchased at the splendid price of 6*d.* a day, or ½*d.* an hour. It is pretended, that the repeal of the Corn-laws will throw some thousands of labourers out of employ in Ireland; but are there not already, according to the Irish Poor Report, two millions of souls in a state of utter destitution in that unhappy country, and 600,000 able bodied men out of employ? This report shows farther, that by the extraordinary experiment tried upon the currency, by the right hon. Baronet, the Member for Tamworth, in the measure of the year 1819, the Irish labourer received a blow from which he has not yet recovered; but that, on the contrary, he has been receding in wretchedness, whilst the English labourer has been improving. The whole report goes to show, that Ireland is now in an unparalleled state of misery and destitution. Why, we are so poor, that we are not able to raise even 2,300,000*l.* for railroads, and you refuse us even your credit to assist us in raising it. The present miserable state of Ireland has been so ably and so beautifully described by the noble Lord, the Secretary for Ireland, in his recent speech on this subject, that I cannot avoid quoting a short passage from it:—

> "Look at the surface of England, and then contrast it with the surface of Ireland; in the one country the soil is improved by all the natural processes of agriculture in its produce, and its wealth distributed through countless channels. Its mills and workshops are clustered in every direction; its factories are gathered on the banks of every river, and forests of masts are thickening every port, In the other, the country is scantily cultivated; its plains are yet more fertile, and yet more level; but the hand of industry is not heard on every side, and on the yet more spacious and still more rapid rivers, the easily counted sails drop down to the comparatively deserted harbours."

"Look on this picture, and on this," and then pretend still, that your Corn-laws are an advantage to Ireland. The fact is, they are an advantage only to her aristocracy, to her landed aristocracy, whilst to her industrious but starving population they do but confirm and render hopeless their miserable condition. Do but give an increased stimulus to the manufacturing industry of this country, and the beneficial effect of it will soon be felt in Ireland also. A petition has recently been presented to this House, from which I beg to read one passage, as it is my expression on this point. "That our manufactures and commerce have been destroyed; and remittances of great portions of our produce to absentees increase the capital of England and diminish the resources of Ireland, leaving agriculture the only source of national prosperity." The only resources which the Irish people had now to look to, is English manufactures. Why, as it is, there is not a manufacturing town in England in which there are not 40,000 or 60,000, aye, as many as 80,000 of my fellow countrymen employed. What I want, therefore, is to give a stimulant to the manufacturing industry of this country, as the only hope for Ireland. Repeal the Corn-laws, and our manufactures will increase and spread in all directions; continue them, and you make their increase impossible. Persist in maintaining these laws, and you will drive Ireland to despair, and England, I think, to a movement for which you are not prepared. You will have a shout raised in your ears which I think you will be obliged to listen to, when you find the Chartists telling you, in their insolence, that you only represent 700,000, whilst they represent 25,000,000 of people, and that to their superior authority you must succumb. Sir, I promised the House a short speech, and I have kept my word.

Viscount *Sandon* said, that although the hon. and learned Member for Dublin, had kept his promise with respect to making a short speech, he had not failed to raise the old cry of justice to Ireland. He had also attempted to raise within the walls of that House a cry which had, up to that time, been only heard, with one or two exceptions, outside. The hon. and learned Member had endeavoured to create a feeling that upon this question the aristocracy were united in opposition to the poor for their own sordid and private interests, and to represent them as oppressors of the people, who interposed between them and the possession of abundance. He had represented the Corn-law as an unjust protection to agriculture, and had described it as one of the evils resulting from the old feudal system. Was the hon. Member for Dublin aware that in countries where no feudal system had ever existed, as well as in those countries in which that system had been abolished, there were protections for the agricultural interest? In the principal States of Europe there were Corn-laws; even in the United States there was a

Corn-law; in France there was a Corn-law, where the charge could not be laid, that it was enacted in obedience to the will of the aristocracy; in Holland there was a Corn-law; in Belgium there was a Corn-law; in fact, there was scarcely any country without a similar law of some kind and with this fact staring him in the face, would the hon. Member for Dublin dare to assert, that the Corn-law in England was merely a remnant of the feudal system? The hon. and learned Member had talked very largely of freedom of trade, and so had many other Gentlemen previously, but it often happened that when Gentlemen connected with any peculiar manufacturing or commercial interest advocated free trade without protection, they stated, that the interest with which they were most intimately connected was the very one which formed the exception as not calculated to experience benefit from the removal of protection. One Gentleman from Manchester, who was an advocate for the removal of all protection from the trade in corn, said, he admitted, that he should be equally solicitous for the removal of legislative protection from the manufacturers, if they could bear up against competition without it, thus admitting, that they required its continuance. The hon. Member for Dublin had instanced the case of Tuscany, as evidence of the good which would arise from removing the protection on agriculture. Nothing could be more different than the position with respect to the trade in corn of Tuscany and this country. Tuscany was a country from which corn had been exported, and the effect which it was feared would follow was an increased price, produced by the increase of exportation consequent to a free trade in that article. That surely afforded no argument to bear upon the question then before them. There was another part of the hon. Member's speech to which he should call the attention of the House, namely, the assertion of the hon. and learned Member, that he had never said the change in the Corn-laws would have an injurious effect upon Ireland. Now, that assertion did not very well agree with the statement in a subsequent portion of his speech, that he would sacrifice Irish interests upon that occasion to the interests of England. Now, if the repeal of the Corn-laws, would not have an injurious effect upon Ireland, there would be no sacrifice of the Irish interests in the hon. and learned Member's support of such a measure. But it was quite clear, that such an alteration in the law, would injure the interests of Ireland. They had been told by hon. Members opposite, that the repeal of the Corn-laws would have the effect of increasing the demand for our manufactures in Poland and Prussia, as they would then export their corn to us. The noble Lord, the Secretary at War had admitted, that the repeal of the Corn-laws would, by this means, benefit the Polish farmers. If that were true, how could the repeal be beneficial to the Irish farmers? Passing from what he must call these vulgar appeals to the country, he could not help thinking that it sufficiently appeared, that there was no reason to doubt that the Corn-laws did not operate injuriously upon the commerce of the country. The noble Lord then referred to statements made by a Gentleman who was an advocate for the Corn-laws, and at the same time interested in commercial pursuits, who declared, that throughout the greater part of the last year, a large and profitable business was transacted. The noble Lord also referred to other letters, showing, but amid much noise and confusion, that the cotton manufacture, had, during the past year, been prosperous, and he contended, that the commerce of the country being admitted to be generally in a prosperous state, and particularly that branch of it from which the agitation on the subject of the Corn-laws had originally proceeded, he could not discover, that ruin, decay, and distress, by which the country had been frightened out of its propriety. His right hon. Friend, the President of the Board of Trade, had, on a former occasion, maintained, that the best test of the prosperity of a country, was the fact, whether the internal consumption of commodities was larger or smaller, and he had been referred, in a tone of triumph and satisfaction, to the increase in the home consumption as an infallible indication of the prosperity which the country at that time enjoyed. But if his right hon. Friend's satisfaction was great at that time, it ought to be much greater now, as our consumption for domestic purposes, had greatly increased since the period to which he had referred. He was aware the House was exhausted, but he had felt himself bound to state some of the reasons upon which, looking at this question in a commercial point of view, he had satitfied himself, that no ground had been shown for abandoning that protection to agriculture which it had ever been the policy of this country to afford. Finding, moreover, that her Majesty's Ministers had not even shadowed out a scheme of policy to be pursued in reference to the subject, he should be deserting his duty if he gave his consent to the House going into Committee, as it would have the effect of leaving the whole question open.

Mr. *Harvey* said, it was in no disparagement of the many able speeches which had been made during this protracted debate: it was in no disparagement of the many able treatises and criticisms on political economy which had been delivered: it was in no disparagement of those powers of memory by which some hon. Members had been able to commit to their recollection entire pamphlets of statistics, that might be purchased at Ridgway's shop for the trifling sum of eighteenpence: it was in no disparagement of all these circumstances, that he was led to say, that at the close of a five nights' discussion, he found and felt this subject to be more confused than it was at its very commencement. There were so many statements which had been assumed as facts, and which were advanced with all the boldness of facts; and there were so many true inferences drawn from them, if the statements were not false, that there was scarcely any position in favour or against those laws—of their being relaxed or made more stringent, which he would venture to say the Gentlemen who spoke in that House had not amply and ably demonstrated. With this impression, therefore, strongly on his mind, and feeling the force of that truth which had been so frequently uttered (and, as they approached the termination of the discussion, more properly urged), that "nothing new could be said on this subject," he should at once shrink from making an appeal to the kindness of the House, if he did not feel, that there was an interest in this country—that there was a great class whose welfare, so far as it depended on this question, had been very slightly and inadequately noticed. It was, however, to him most gratifying, to find that at length the industrious community (the great sources of national power, and the origin of all wealth, whether their hands were directed to the cultivation of the soil, or supplied the moving power in our manufactories) had assumed an appropriate position. Not, indeed, that they were present in their own persons, or by direct representation in that House, but from a new course of policy—either by the influence of feelings honestly entertained or hypocritically assumed, the labouring community had become essential parties in their consideration. He would venture to say, that—notwithstanding the partial and glimmering allusions to their condition made in varied terms throughout the debate—if any one of them were present, and the discussion were suffered to close where it now stood, he might justly impute it as neglect in that portion of the House who are the representatives of the people (too few in number), that they had suffered the prominent interest of the working classes to be passed over without being duly considered. He did not rise, then, for the purpose of reviewing this great subject in all its bearings, which had been so ably and so dexterously done by the right hon. Baronet (Sir Robert Peel); but he humbly solicited the attention of the House while he made a very few remarks, having an exclusive connection with that branch of the subject to which he had referred. Identified as he was with the people—sprung from them, and being of their number, as he acknowledged himself to be, and glorying as he did in this distinction, he wished to treat this subject as one not unmindful of the working classes, and for the first time presenting their views on this subject in an uneducated form. He had not only listened to the speech of the right hon. Baronet (Sir Robert Peel) with the attention which his station and high pretensions justified, but he had done that which, he ventured to say, his most ardent admirers could not boast of, he had read the whole of his reported speech word for word; and he could say with great truth, that it would have been extremely unjust to those Gentlemen who originated the debate, had it closed on Friday; because, he must say, that that speech recalled to his mind that of another hon. and distinguished Member, on the Slave Trade, whose speech produced such an astounding effect, that even hon. Gentlemen, who were prepared to reply to him, were staggered and deterred, and yet subsequent reflection made them surprised at their own hesitation. He could easily believe that many hon. Gentlemen who were adverse to any change in the present system, particularly those who belonged to the powerful party by whom the right hon. Baronet was surrounded, went away with the impression, that it was one of the most unanswerable and overwhelming speeches that ever had been made, even by himself. In one particular they were right. The right hon. Gentleman did certainly shiver to pieces the case of his opponents. He raked the "economists" without mercy, and he bombarded the Government with great success. He hurled at them the whole weight of the fifty pounders, and the agricultural interest were, no doubt, delighted, and almost reeled with intoxication at the effect which he produced. But, though it was a powerful speech, the right hon. Baronet would pardon him for saying it was not the speech of a statesman. All the right hon. Gentleman said might be perfectly true, and yet beside the question. What though it might be true (and it certainly did appear to be so) that the hon. Member for the city of London admitted that the difference between the annual average importation of corn under the restriction and that which would flow into this country in the absence of all restriction, was about 250,000 quarters, he did not apprehend that the hon. Member for London was the corn-meter of the country. The hon. Member for London might have his calculation, and he might have his speculation, but that did not alter the real merits of the question. Then the right hon. Gentleman thought he demolished the case of the petitioners, the master manufacturers, who made statements, from which it was to be inferred, that the commerce of the country was rapidly decaying, and that our circumstances were of a most alarming description. For, said the right hon. Gentleman, "there is no truth in their statements, because, when I come to compare the amount of exports in 1838 with those in 1837, I find the excess in the former-mentioned year to be no less than 7,000,000*l.*" Now, if this were true, and that the exports of 1838 were not only greater than the preceding year, but progressively greater than each of the preceding years, he owned, as far as the manufacturers were concerned, he had, to no inconsiderable degree, shaken their claims, and the grounds on which they contended for the repeal of the existing Corn-laws. But though he did not appear there, and did not wish to be understood, as the advocate of the master-manufacturers—though he had no communication whatever with them —though he felt no partiality in their favour, having a strong preference arising from the recollections of early life for those connected with land, he wished the few statements with which he should trouble the House to be taken as proceeding from one anxiously desirous of coming to a sound and deliberate judgment, free from all considerations of a personal kind. It was right, however, to say, that the statements of the right hon. Gentleman were challenged. He had heard, from the late President of the Chamber of Commerce at Manchester, that the right hon. Gentleman's figures were not incorrect as regarded the years 1837 and 1838, but that, if he had condescended, in his eagerness to balance impartially the facts, without any party bias, and disdaining every attempt which might yield a momentary triumph, intent only on the truth and its elucidation, he had heard it said, that if the right hon. Gentleman had compared the year 1838 with 1836, the difference would be a very substantial one on the other side. The commerce of this country was not to be determined on a comparison of two years. There might be many circumstances which abundantly accounted for the decline in one year, and there might be other circumstances which would explain the superfluous exportation in another, but it was in reference to a series of years, and to all the circumstances connected with commerce, that the actual state of our commercial transactions was to be established. Leaving this part of the subject to the hon. Member who introduced this motion, who would, no doubt, avail himself of the privilege of a reply, and who was in immediate communication with the petitioners, and furnished with ample details, he should proceed to another point. The right hon. Gentleman, with many of those who took part in this debate, was anxious, for very obvious and intelligible reasons, to sympathise with the interest and condition of the working classes. The right hon. Baronet went into a series of figures to prove that they were improving in their condition by reference to the savings' banks. Now, he would at once admit, that if it could be shown that the deposits at the various savings' banks (an institution, the utility of which it was impossible to exaggerate) might be considered as those of the labouring classes, whether agricultural or manufacturing, and if, still more, it could be shown that the numbers were increasing, as well as the amount of capital, he would acknowledge that the right hon. Gentleman had gone a great way to shake the cause of the petitioners. The right hon. Gentleman instanced the returns of many places; that of Liverpool, a great commercial town, and those of Leicester, Nottingham, Manchester, and Glasgow, manufacturing towns. But the numbers of the depositors were comparatively so few, when contrasted with the millions who came under the denomination of labouring classes, and the amount so deposited was so trifling, when it came to be divided amongst so large a mass, that these returns furnished very little evidence of the fact which the right hon. Baronet was desirous to establish. All that the right hon. Gentleman established, he wished the House to observe, was, that the improved amount of those depositors, during the period of two years, over which his calculations extended, was 2*s.* 7*d.* to each individual. He took down the words of the right hon. Gentleman, which he found confirmed by the report of his speech, where he stated the average deposit of each individual to be 5*l.* 15*s.* 4*d.* in 1837, and 5*l.* 17*s.* 11*d.* in 1838, giving just 2*s.* 7*d.* to represent the highly improved condition of the working classes. [Sir *R. Peel:* That was as to Glasgow, and Glasgow only.] Yes, but that was the only instance in which the right hon. Baronet had gone into demonstrative detail; and as he gave the right hon. Gentleman credit for using all his details with consummate skill, he, no doubt, put forward Glasgow as the advanced guard of his argument, in order to cover the weaker parts of it. There were many important considerations connected with these returns. It was delightful to find the progress made by the working men in imitating their superiors. These returns showed how fast they were approximating to the character of capitalists. But how frequently had he heard in that House, when hon. Members were enforcing the necessity of economy; and showing the pressure of taxation upon industry, " if you repeal this tax, or the other tax, what difference would it make —not 2*s.* 7*d.* to each individual;" but when it served their purpose to show that the condition of the labouring community was improving, then every penny was thankfully received, until, at last, 2*s.* 7*d.* was made to be a sum of no slight financial importance. But then the right hon. Gentleman discovered another improvement in the article of coals, and he stated, that as the number of tons of coals carried into Glasgow was something more than double what it had been in the year previous to that to which he referred, he concluded that the people of the town of Glasgow were in a very warm and improving condition. But the right hon. Gentleman also made this admission—that the population had increased greatly and had risen from 102,000 to 247,000. Now, surely, it was not very remarkable, that the demand for coals should have kept pace with the increase in the population. There was one other observation contained in the speech of the right hon. Baronet, which he thought could not fail to strike the House, as he was sure it would do the country, as being of fearful import. He understood the right hon. Baronet to advance this proposition, that a great revolution was going on in the manufacturing interest. It had been stated, and not denied, that the manufactories—the many and prodigious manufactories of the country—were everywhere increasing; that they were presenting their hideous forms (for in his opinion nothing could be more hideous than one of our great modern manufactories) in all the manufacturing towns and districts, and that at Preston, at least (this statement the right hon. Baronet advanced upon information he had received from his noble Friend, Lord Stanley), a vast quantity of capital had of late been employed in the erection of these edifices. Having made that statement, the right hon. Baronet proceeded to observe, that the little manufacturers must be prepared to be swallowed up by the great and more powerful manufactories which the capitalists were in every direction rearing about them, and that they must learn a lesson from the melancholy fate of the handloom-weavers. Did not this fearful statement suggest inquiry? And did it not arouse the fears and apprehensions of that class of persons whose capital was small and machinery defective, and who were thus little able to combat with the great leviathans of capital, who were erecting their establishments in every town? It was one of the mighty evils of the present times—an evil bearing down the general interests of the country—that the small means of the lesser and more industrious class of manufacturers were, day after day, tending to annihilation beneath the force and influence of the powerful efforts of the capitalists. It was the same thing with the farmers. The race of little farmers, who were formerly the pride of the country, and who inherited their property for many centuries from their forefathers—what had become of them? They were swallowed up by the great landed capitalists and loan-mongers, who conspired to divide the soil into larger farms, and thus, satisfied with inferior profits, were rapidly turning the ancient yeomanry of the country into labourers and paupers. And the comfort now held out to the men of small capital in the manufacturing interest was, that they must be prepared to meet the doom and destiny of the hand-loom weaver. Yet when such was their condition, the House was to be told, gravely and seriously, that this was another proof of the growing prosperity of the manufacturing community. The right hon. Baronet, the Member for Pembroke (Sir James Graham) had also declared his sentiments upon this subject, and had sought with great skill to enlist the sympathies and feelings of the agricultural community by contrasting the happy lot of him who was engaged in tilling the soil, with the wretched and melancholy condition of those who were immured in crowded cities, subject to the ills of noxious vapours, and breathing the pestilential atmosphere around them. It was really delightful to listen to the poetical description in which the right hon. Baronet called the attention of the House to the lowly home of the cottager, cast on the hill side, and gladdened by the golden waves of harvest around it. The right hon. Baronet would fain have led the House to believe, that all the agricultural labourers in the country were in a state of enviable prosperity, that they were to be seen musing at evening at the cottage door, chatting over their little inconveniences, putting aside their little deprivations, that they might the better take their children upon their knees, those little treasures, happy as innocent, who in cheerful groups had been waiting "to lisp" their sire's return. If the right hon. Baronet had been allowed to read Gray's Elegy he could not have been more touching. But was his story true? The right hon. Baronet having sat incessantly upon the Poor-law Committee, had the means of ascertaining the actual condition of the agricultural labouring classes, and yet he completely shut out from his mind the whole of the evidence he had heard, and in that House endeavoured by the witchery of his fancy—by the display of poetical and fascinating language—to beguile the House from the contemplation of the actual fact, and to seduce it into the adoption of a conclusion which he knew not to be true. It was strange the right hon. Baronet, the Member for Pembroke—for he, before all men, had advocated the doctrine, that the labouring man must be thrown upon his own resources; that the standard by which he was to be fed in the workhouse must be the sum it might be in his power to earn outside of the workhouse; and that if this were not sufficient for his sustenance, the lowly cottage must be forsaken, and he must be compelled with his smiling children to become the wretched tenants of the union workhouses. Was it to be said gravely—was it to go forth throughout the country (an insult to the working community, and more especially the agricultural classes) that their condition was at the present moment improved? When they contrasted that statement with the hypocrisy of the motive in which it originated, it was impossible not to feel deeply disgusted. Because to say, that the agricultural labourer was now in the receipt of wages commensurate with the rise in the price of his food, was a statement that could be denied by every workman in every county in England. But there was an object as well as fallacy in that statement. The right hon. Baronet knew full well, and so did the formidable party by whom he was surrounded, that they could not sustain the Corn-laws for another hour unless they could strengthen themselves by causing it to be believed that the question was only, in a subordinate sense, a landlord's question; that it was, in a paramount and direct sense, a tenant's question; but that, above all things, and before all things, it was a labourers' question. Now, he was prepared to contend, that it was primarily a landlord's question; secondarily, in a considerable degree (at least so far as affected a particular class), a tenant's question; and, further, that it was, indeed, a deep question as affecting the working community; but just in the converse sense to that in which the argument had been advanced by the supporters of the Corn-laws. He did not at all agree with his hon. Friend the Member for Wolverhampton either in the statement or the inference he drew from it, that the farmers and cultivators of the soil were men of little education, unacquainted with business, and strongly attached to localities. Quite the reverse—they were a very able and dexterous class—they had lived too long, too closely connected with the landlords not to know their own interests. Therefore, although he understood the motive which led the right hon. Baronet (Sir Robert Peel) to enforce his observations upon that point so earnestly, that he might enlist on his side the powerful class of tenants throughout the land, and induce them to look with gratitude to the indignant and eloquent vindication which their assumed interests had received at his hands in that House; although he understood the motive which led the right hon. Baronet to take that course, he was prepared to admit that the vindication was complete—that the farmers were not ignorant, were men of business, were fond of their homes (though they never failed to leave them when there was any thing to be got by it). Yes, he quite agreed with the right hon. Baronet that the farmers were not men indifferent to or ignorant of their own interests. But, although the right hon. Baronet and his adherents insisted that the question was not a landlord's question, they had evinced an exceeding anxiety to call the attention of the House to the pressure of what they called taxation, as it bore upon the landlords, and to that extent, at least said they, "it is a landlord's question." Now he was prepared to contend that, so far from the landlords being taxed more than any other class of the community, they were not only exempted from all taxation, but were positively benefited by our system of taxation. He should like very much to have a committee of account, the object of whose labours should be to show, in separate columns of debit and credit, what it was that the great aristocracy of the land—an essential part of our constitution—forming not only its boast but its strength, being not only its most beautiful part, but the part which at any cost must be maintained—he should like to see an account prepared showing what it was that the aristocracy or the great landlords actually paid in direct taxation, and what they actually received. He had never heard it mentioned in the course of the debate,—and considering the length to which their discussions had extended, it was certainly remarkable that anything should have eluded them—he had never heard mentioned the amount of taxation to which the country was subjected, nor the proportions which each class of the community was called upon to pay. The gross amount of the country's taxation might be stated in round numbers at 50,000,000*l.* a-year. If they were to go into committee with the view of ascertaining the fact, he would venture to say it would be found that upwards of 30,000,000*l.* of that sum fell directly upon the labouring community, while of the remaining 20,000,000*l.*, he would challenge the right hon. Baronet (Sir Robert Peel) to show that anything approaching to 5,000,000*l.*, even conceding to him the items he had enumerated as bearing exclusively upon the landlords, were borne by that particular interest. There was a return made to that House not very remotely, in which the places held by every Gentleman in the House were set forth, together with the salary and advantages which attached to each. Now, when they came to consider how many Members of that House were in the navy, how many in the army, how many in the possession of civil appointments, and when they travelled from the individual circumstances of these Gentlemen, to the contemplation of their immediate dependents, in short, when they took a walk through all our great establishments, when they looked at the list of clerks in the financial departments—in the Custom-house, in the Excise, in the Stamp-office—[An *hon. Member:* In the hackney-coach-office]. Aye, or as the right hon. Gentleman with excellent taste said, in the hackney-coach-office; when they looked at the number of clerks employed in all these offices, it would be found that those immediately connected with the land, and who it was pretended were entitled to exception from taxation on account of the heavy burdens imposed upon their property, were receiving back again a great deal more than they actually paid to the general finances of the country. Well, indeed, might these Gentlemen say, that they had a direct interest in supporting the establishments of the country; because whilst they contributed towards their support with one hand, they were abundantly remunerated by what they drew from them with the other. Without enumerating, or still less analysing the claim of these Gentlemen to exemption as regarded the various items which they maintained were exclusively imposed upon the soil, such as the malt-tax, the land-tax, church-rates, and payments of that description—without fortifying the House with arguments to combat their claim to exemption upon those grounds—believing, as he did, however, that the only item which in any way came fairly under the head of an exclusive payment, was that of the land-tax, yet he did wish just to call the attention of the House for one moment to the manner in which upon a former occasion these Gentlemen had dealt with the claims which they now put forward as entitling them to exemption. The hon. Gentleman the Member for North Yorkshire (Mr. Cayley), who moved, or rather placed upon the notice-paper of the House, an amendment which he did not move, amongst other things enumerated the church-rates as one of the burdens upon the soil. Did the hon. Gentleman forget, or could other Gentlemen forget, when, not long since, an effort was made in that House to rescue the Protestant Dissenters from the payment of church-rates, that all the Gentlemen on the opposite side were up in arms, not merely to resist the claim upon general grounds, but to impute motives, to impute selfish considerations, to those who made it. "Oh," said the hon. Gentleman, on that occasion, "the conduct of these men is the more odious, because they come here under the pretence of relieving their consciences, when they are in point of fact, asking for nothing else than the relief of their estates." He had not heard that language repeated in the present debate. But if that charge were well founded, what was the argument advanced in support of it? It was this:—"Did you not buy your estates subject to church-rates, and are you not odious hypocrites when you come to this House, and ask upon the ground of conscientiousness to be relieved from the payment of them? Why did not every man of you, at the time you purchased your property, receive an equivalent for the church-rates you would afterwards have to pay, in the diminished price which you gave, as compared with what you would have been required to pay if the property were not liable to this impost?" Why that argument applied with equal or greater force to the land-tax, because, let it be recollected, that the land-tax was not a modern tax; it was as old at least as a century and a half; and where was the man amongst the hon. Gentlemen opposite who inherited an estate, or who had purchased an estate, who had not taken it subject to the land-tax? If it were not so—if the land-tax were redeemed—was not that circumstance carefully and prominently put forth in the particulars of the sale, and was not the amount of the purchase money greater if the tax were redeemed, and less if it were unredeemed? Then, upon what principle was it that the landlords could claim any protection in the shape of a Corn-law, because that, after all, was the real question. And it was a very remarkable circumstance, that throughout the whole of this debate no one person had endeavoured to vindicate the Corn-law upon any other ground (or at least prominently so) than that protection was called for having reference to the high taxation and artificial condition of the landed interest. It was very true, that there had been two arguments pressed into the discussion which were of modern growth, and which had been forced into the debate by the landlords, because they felt, that their other arguments were failing them. If there were any foundation for these two arguments all the rest might as well be thrown overboard, because whether the land were lightly taxed, or heavily taxed, the two positions he was about to notice would equally apply. The first argument was this—that no country, and least of all, this country, ought to be dependant for the supply of its food upon foreign states. The second proposition was this—that a Corn-law—(an hon. Gentleman near him said, that this was not a new proposition, but if it were not new, it had, at all events, been pressed far more prominently into this debate than upon any former occasion)—that a Corn-law was necessary to give protection against the influence of climate. Now, if either or both of those grounds were as irresistible as those who urged them contended they were, would they not, under all possible circumstances, be available? But these points had been so successfully answered by many succeeding speakers, that it would only be going over ground already traversed if he were to enter into a train of reasoning to refute them again. He would, therefore, only express his surprise that Gentlemen should contend, that the best way of securing a supply of food or of corn was by limiting the sources from which it was to be obtained. He, for one, was weak enough to suppose, that the wider the field of supply, the more would the chances of failure be diminished. Although it might be said, as indeed it was said by the hon. Member for the North Riding of Yorkshire (Mr. Cayley), and afterwards, he believed, reverted to by the right hon. Baronet in a quotation which he made from Adam Smith, that the corn-producing countries of Europe laid pretty much in the same latitude, and were subject to the same vicissitudes and same seasons as those which affected us in England, although that might be true, and if it were so, it was evident, that England would be no worse off than other countries; still the larger the extent of ground from which the supply was to be obtained, the less would be the chance of failure. Applying that argument, for instance, only to England itself, look at the returns from the corn districts, and it would be found, that though there had been a failure of crop in Essex, it had fortunately been made up by a more than usual average in some other distant county; and, indeed, if the whole circuit of the counties of England were run over, it would turn out, that the deficiency of crop in one county was more than made up in another county. Take, for instance, the case of hops last season. No person could have gone through the county of Hereford without being struck by the failure of the hop crops—there was last season scarcely a hop-bine to be seen in an healthy state, and yet those connected with the trade were met by the assurance, that though there would be a failure in Hereford, there would be more than an usually large supply in Essex, and that the hop-bines looked well in Kent. If this remark applied to England, would it not apply with still greater force to the more extended surface of the Continent, or to the world at large, to which we might look for a supply, if, indeed, by any unfortunate circumstance, the crop should wholly fail at home. Then as to the other argument, that it was desirable to give protection, because in this country we were exposed to vicissitudes of climate and of seasons, why, of all the mad contrivances, that human legislation ever resorted to, surely none could be so visionary or so vicious, as to attempt to control the seasons, or meet the exigencies of them by any provisions of law. The seasons moved on in harmonious regularity, under the guidance of the wisdom which it would be well for us to imitate; but it did not belong to human beings to control them—the seasons moved on in their course, showering upon the nations of the earth blessings which they did not always appreciate. It was, therefore, incumbent upon them to go back to the inquiry whether this was not in truth a landlord's question. He would very briefly state what he considered it to be; because he was one of those who were at all times anxious to legislate for practical purposes, and he should be well pleased to concur in any plan that would meet the claims of the various conflicting interests which abounded in the country. While, therefore, abstractedly, he owned himself friendly to what was called unrestrained free-trade, he was not so infatuated in his judgement as to believe, that the only mode in which the conflicting interests of the country were to be appeased was by resorting to extreme measures; for he would not conceal his decided impression, that to resort to what was called free-trade precipitately and at once, would shower great mischief upon a large portion of the community. Even as concerned the tenants, whose fortunes it was contended were so closely identified with that of the landlords, there was a class of them to which the solicitude of the House ought to be directed—the tenants under covenants. What would be their condition if a system of free trade were instantaneously resorted to? Was the House prepared coincident with the adoption of free trade to pass a law by which this class of tenants should be emancipated from the stipulations of their covenants? He would not attempt as some hon. Gentlemen had done to soothe the landed interest with an assurance that free trade would not affect them. It would affect them deeply; and so it ought. They had had a long run of advantages, and the time was at hand when they must be prepared to forego a considerable portion of them. On every occasion that farms become vacant the number of applicants outrun the number of farms, and from the competition for land thus existing among the tenantry, high rents are always given, and the landlord reaps the benefit. Therefore he did not hesitate to say, that under these circumstances, and taking into consideration the covenants under which many tenants held their farms, to bring about a system of free trade all at once, and without providing for such cases was a system to which he was not prepared to be a party. Nor was it the tenants under the covenants that would be the only sufferers by such a sudden change; the effects would also prove most injurious to the tenants-at-will, for this class of tenants had embarked their all in the soil. They had invested their capital in agriculture, in farm houses, implements of husbandry, in stock, and the various necessaries for carrying on their business, and what would be the value of all that they had thus embarked in the soil if the Legislature were to destroy altogether and at once the system under which they had thus laid out their capital, and adopt what is called the system of free trade? He considered it would be dealing unfairly to adopt that system at once, and therefore he would not be a party to its introduction. Nor did he think, that the right hon. Baronet opposite had dealt with this question in his speech as a great statesman, although he may have discussed it in a well-considered and skilful manner as the leader of a powerful party. The right hon. Baronet and other hon. Members who followed him on the opposite side, had laid great force upon the circumstance, and had endeavoured to found a strong argument upon the fact, that the Government had not been pleased to communicate what they might be disposed to do when in Committee. It was all very well for the right hon. Baronet to pursue that line of argument; it no doubt suited his position remarkably well, who found it at times somewhat difficult to keep his people in order. But he should have liked to have seen the countenance of hon. Members opposite; he should have been anxious to have witnessed their chuckle if Government had come forward on this occasion, and stated that they were prepared to say what they would do, and had in fact, as they in that case must have done, communicated to the House what plan of alteration, and what extent of change they, as a Cabinet, were prepared to advocate. Certain he was they would not have liked it. Whatever plan Government might have proposed, it would have been objected to. If a fixed duty, it would have been said, that it was too high to answer in years of scarcity, and recourse would be had to an order in council, to set it aside; while in seasons of abundance it would afford no reasonable protection to the home grower. Had the Government, then, announced their plan as had been argued they ought to have done, what chance, he asked, would it have had, under any circumstances, of success? Look at the manner in which this question had been treated in another place, and then let them say, whether the developement of the intentions of the Government would have led to any useful result. Well, but the hon. Members opposite will say, why did not the present Cabinet act as other Cabinets have done? Why not state on their responsibility as a Government what course they thought it was for the best interests of this country to follow—abandoning the shelter of an open question—and then if they were unsuccessful in persuading this House to consent to their policy, let the Government change hands and allow them (the hon. Members opposite) to step forward and take their places. It was one thing however for a Government to come boldly forward, and to act in that manner for the purpose of proposing measures to carry out the obvious desires and the wishes of the people, but it was another thing when the Government were in advance of the hope to endeavour to control and to coerce public opinion. He had never hesitated, as a Member of that House, to express his sentiments and to lament the backward policy of the Government — he had always felt and declared that their hesitating, vacillating policy, had greatly impeded the march of useful reform. But their backwardness had reference to subjects upon which all sincere Reformers were agreed, and not upon questions like the present, upon which they were so seriously divided. He did not hesitate to say, that the great constituent body of the people of this country were directly and firmly opposed to any great or sudden alteration in the Corn-laws. But he was anxious to advert to two other topics that had been dwelt on by the hon. Members opposite. He was desirous to do so as the poor man's friend, and the poor man's organ in that House. He was anxious to put the question in a new shape, and to advert to one or two points that had not been previously alluded to, and he trusted he would be listened to, because he considered that all arguments bearing upon the truth and tendency of this great subject should be brought forward even if they sat another week. He would allude to them very briefly. It was contended, that when the price of corn was low, the rate of wages was proportionally low; and that when an advance took place in the price of corn, there was a corresponding increase in the price of the wages of labour. He would not repeat the answers that had been already given to this argument; but would observe, that if this were really true, there would be no advantage in the restrictive system. But to prove such was not the fact, he would refer them on this point to the evidence taken before the Poor-law Committee; and he would say farther, that he believed that never before in the history of parliamentary inquiry was the poor man asked for his opinion. Though on former occasions they had landlords and their agents, and farmers, before committees on agricultural distress, it was reserved for the committee on the Poor-law of last Session to examine the labouring man; and he thought it but right also to state that when these poor men were examined before the committee, no one who heard them could have overlooked, or could have forgotten, their straight-forward conduct and plain common-sense answers. So much satisfaction did their conduct afford the committee, that the Chairman was requested to express the pleasure which the committee had experienced from their whole behaviour. The line of examination which was pursued towards these labouring men referred, of course, to the question of wages, and it was shown, that whether the weekly amount of wages was 8*s*. or 11*s*., the labouring man, after paying for his bread, had only 1*s*. 2*d*. left wherewith to pay for the maintenance of his wife and family and his other domestic expenses. He trusted, that he should be pardoned in requesting the attention of the House for a few moments to allude more particularly to some of the evidence given before that committee, and he wished it to be known to the world, that the Members of the Senate of England, who sat on that committee, listened to the sentiments of these poor men, with exemplary patience and kindness. There was one poor man examined—a venerable man named James Kershaw, who told them, that if he lived to the next 6th of June he would be ninety-one years of age. He had survived all his family, but his faculties were quite entire, and he could tell the story of nearly a century. This man had no interest to give a gloss to his statement, and he would read a portion of his evidence. The hon. Member read as follows, " What age are you?—If I live to the 6th of June I shall be ninety-one." He had survived his family, and could tell the history of nearly a century; his evidence was important, because the few months of life left him had nothing to induce him to gloss over his story. He was asked " Do you remember the condition of the labourer during your life?—Yes; when I was first married I could have a bushel of malt for half-a-crown, and every poor person had a barrel of beer to drink instead of water, but it soon rose to 3*s*. 6*d*." That question had been put by the hon. Member for Kent (Mr. Hodges); who also asked him, " Did the labouring man in former times use to brew as a general thing?—Yes." How long have they left it off?—Ever since malt got to such a price that they could not buy it." Do you know any poor man who brews his own beer now?—Not one." Do you remember the rate of wages at the time of the American war?—Yes; 1*s*. 4*d*. a-day, or 8*s*. a-week." It might be said, that going so far back was referring to a period that had nothing to do with the question. In answer to that he would say, that he had heard many statistical details introduced in the debate that had much less connexion with the question. The witness was further asked, would the labourers be able to do more work if they had better food? The answer was, " To be sure, they cannot do more than half a-day's work; some of them dropped down when they had a little hard work." If it were said, that this man was too old, and that his faculties were impaired so as to affect the weight of his opinion, he would take another labourer of the name of Thomas Preston, whose age was only thirty-eight. This man was asked by a Member of the committee, with whom, although hon. Members may differ in political sentiments, they will not dispute his competency to take a part in such an enquiry—he meant Mr. Wakley. " Do you feel in performing your work, that you have the strength a man ought to have?" He replied, " No, nor yet half the strength; I am not so strong as I was." He asked then, what was the character of that evidence? How did it agree with the descriptions which they had heard of the condition of the labouring classes, and of the rate of wages? How was it these labouring men, for whom hon. Members opposite had of late taken such an extraordinary predilection, that they had received them into their confidence, formed Conservative clubs for their benefit, and joined them at their dinners, with noble Peers for their presidents, and paupers for their stewards, whose opinions were now venerated in high places, whose sentiments were become hereditary canons with the landlords, whom even dukes quote, and perhaps, it was wise in them to do so, rather than to risk anything original, for these quotations did them great credit. But what did the evidence he had read imply, but that the greatest misery prevailed among these agricultural labourers. What a fallacious picture had the hon. Gentleman opposite drawn of the situation of the agricultural labourer? How different from the simple, unadorned statement of the poor men whose evidence he had just read! It was true, that the labouring men of the present day did not act as their fathers had done in the year 1815. They did not crowd our doors, nor menace Members, nor endeavour to extort promises. Hon. Members did not now live in terror, nor in times when, as seems by the narrative of Mr. Wilberforce, he was obliged to garrison his House and keep a military force within it for self-preservation. But the change for the better was not owing to any improvement in the situation of the labouring classes, but because these classes now thought and judged more wisely and understood far better what was their real interest. He rejoiced that it was so, and he trusted when they appealed to this House, and to the hon. Members opposite for an admission to share in political rights, that their appeal would be graciously received, and that they would be allowed to vote, and thus peradventure give the hon. Members opposite more counties than they represented at present. He trusted, that they would not turn round upon them, and say that they were not fit for high political duties. It surely would be ungrateful in hon. Members opposite to act in that way to their new friends, whose sayings had become proverbs in high places, subjects of eulogy among the great. He trusted, that they would not refuse to admit these men into the pale of the constitution, and that they would find no difficulty in acting hereafter on their present opinions, or betray any difference between what they now said and what they would then do. There was still one subject he wished to touch. It had been said, that wages rise with the price of corn, and that they fall as corn decreases in price. He asked if that was borne out by statistical facts? He would read some calculations on that point from a series of letters that had been published by one of the most extensive landholders in the kingdom (Earl Fitzwilliam). No man could deny to that nobleman the credit of disinterestedness, and he only wished it had been consistent with the rules of that House to allow the production of that noble Lord to have been read from the Chair. He would have wished to have heard the three letters of Earl Fitzwilliam in favour of an alteration in the Corn-laws, and the addresses of Lord Western against alteration, and then that the votes of Members should have been taken on the merits. According to the table of wages given by Earl Fitzwilliam in 1801, when the wages were 10*s.* a week; after paying for two-thirds of a bushel, the cost of the family was 9*s.* 10*d.*, leaving a surplus of 2*d.* In 1810, wages at 10*s.*, flour 8*s.*, surplus 2*s.*; in 1814, wages 14*s.*, flour 6*s.*, surplus 7*s.* 11*d.*; 1820, wages 12*s.*, flour 5*s.* 6*d.*, surplus 6*s.* 6*d.*; 1822, wages 10*s.*, flour 3*s.* 8*d.*, surplus 6*s.* 4*d.*; 1829, wages 11*s.*, flour 5*s.* 6*d.*, surplus 5*s.* 6*d.* The main fact elicited by these tables is, that when corn was cheap the labourer received higher wages than when the price was dear, and thus left a larger surplus applicable to the purchase of the necessaries and comforts of life. It was a fallacy to suppose, that the value of the labourer's wages depended on the specific amount in money. The real test was what he could purchase for the wages which were paid to him in exchange for his labour. A labouring man might be just as well off with wages of 9*s.* as of 18*s.* It was what his labour could bring him in exchange with other commodities—that was the value of his wages. He had received a letter that morning from an intelligent person, a friend of his in the county of Essex, which he would read to the House. The letter was to the effect, that all classes had received their full share in the debate except the agricultural labourers. From landowners on one side, and high price of bread on the other, the labourers had been jammed into a most unfair predicament. The poor labourer was left alone, and the public laboured under a delusion. Notwithstanding the high price of food, wages had undergone no change. Wages were no more than 9*s.* a week, and this they had been for several years. In some places perhaps wages had risen as much as twenty per cent., but bread had risen from fifty to seventy per cent. He knew that these details were dry and uninteresting, but as stress had been laid upon the argument, that high prices produced high wages he wished to show the fallacy of that opinion. As it was contended, that the maintenance of the present Corn-laws was not so much a landlord's question, or a tenant's question, as it was a labourer's question, he was anxious to lay before the House the facts of the case, as they actually bore on the real interests and condition of the labourer. One word more, and he had done. He regretted much the terms of this motion; it was much too narrow for its object. They ought not to have been engaged now, and especially for the length of time which this debate had occupied, in considering the condition of a mere class interest—for such it was. It was pressed on their attention by a powerful party, in this House and out of it—by the master manufacturers. The motion should have been much wider and larger, and he should have been pleased, that the motion had been, that the House should resolve itself into a committee to consider the financial state of the nation; and although that had not been pressed upon them, it was the question; and say what they would, the Repeal of the Corn-laws would not tend to advance the condition of the labourer, unless they directed their attention to what appeared to him the landlords anxious desire to conceal—the state of our taxation; for if free trade in corn were granted to-morrow, he believed, that it would afford little if any advantage to the labourer either in manufactures or agriculture. He hoped, that the candour of this declaration would not be unpleasant, but he was stating what he believed to be true, and he was indifferent whether it pleased or not. He said, that it was a delusion, and it was supporting a dangerous and pernicious idea to suppose, that England could compete with all the countries with which she was competing, and with whom she was anxious to run a still stronger and longer race of competition so long as there was the present enormous and frightful inequality in their financial relations. An hon. Member, in the course of this discussion, had stated the amount of the debt and annual expenditure in different countries of Europe, and contrasted their respective amounts with the annual taxation of our own: whence it appeared that the amount of taxation of this, as compared with that of other countries, was as fifty millions were to eight millions. He begged to ask hon. Gentlemen in what way they fancied that this country could bear up successfully against the violent efforts now making by the young life and the young blood of foreign trade, which were hourly brought to bear against our manufacturing efforts? If we had free trade in corn, and an unchanged system of taxation, he believed, that the manufacturers would be even worse off, because they would find, that the only resource they had to fall back upon would be the wages of labour, and thus, instead of improving the condition of the working classes, greater discontent, because greater misery, would ensue. The time was gone by, when national benefit was to be attained by consulting exclusive interests; larger and purer motives must animate our deliberations. The only sure and lasting method of upholding our national greatness, whether we regarded our agricultural or commercial interests, was by well-considered measures far advancing the social comfort, the moral improvement, and thus permanently to increase the happiness of the industrious population.

Sir *Robert Peel* desired to say a few words in explanation, upon a matter of fact alone, upon which he was sure the hon. Member had unintentionally misrepresented what he had said. The first point was, as to the amount of coal consumed in Glasgow. The hon. Member had stated, that he had said, that the increase in the population of that city, from the year 1812 to 1833, was from 103,000 to 262,000, and that the increase in the quantity of coal consumed was from 500,000 tons to 1,200,000. The hon. Member had, however, mistaken the statement which he had made to the House. He had said, that the population had increased from the year 1812 to 1838 by more than double, but that from 1831 to 1838, being the period in which the Corn-laws were in operation, the quantity of coals consumed had increased from 500,000 to 1,200,000. That was the first point. The hon. Gentleman had also made a curious error in respect to the savings' bank at Glasgow. The hon. Gentleman had stated, that he had said, that the total increase of the profit to contributors in one year, between 1837 and 1838, was 2*s.* 7*d.* a-head. Now, in 1837, supposing there were 1,000 contributors, and 1*l.* each the average amount of contributions, and then, supposing that in 1838 there were 2,000 contributors of 2*l.* each, and 2,000 of 10*s.* each, the average amount of contributions would be only 15*s.*, and the hon. Member would infer that the condition of the labouring classes would be worse by 5*s.*

Mr. *Hindley* rose amidst loud cries of "question!" and "divide!" After some time he obtained a partial hearing, and was understood to say, he only rose to repel the imputations cast upon the manufacturing classes by the hon. Member for Lincolnshire, and the right hon. Baronet, the Member for Tamworth, and he was sure, that if those hon. Members were as well acquainted with the manufacturing districts as he was, they would be aware, that there were no grounds for them. As to the House going into committee, he thought that they should at once accede to the proposition which was made, in order that a fixed duty might be determined upon. All his constituents were urging him to support a measure for the total repeal of the existing laws, but if he were asked that night to give such a vote, he had no hesitation in saying, that he would rather lose his seat than give such a vote. He desired that the question should be considered, not with a view of destroying the agricultural interests, but to secure justice to the people, and he was confident, that no time could arrive which would be more favourable to the discussion of the subject than the present.

Mr. *Dennistoun*, as the representative of one of the largest commercial and manufacturing towns in the empire, craved for a few minutes the indulgence of the House. He had listened with great attention to the speeches which had been delivered on both sides of the question, and especially to the speech of the right hon. Baronet (Sir Robert Peel), and one more elaborately full of fallacies he had never heard either in or out of that House. He would pass over the part relating to the noble Lord and his colleagues, which they were quite able to answer—he would not notice the references to the political economists, and would touch only upon that which occupied a material portion of the address—the statement that our exports were increasing. Certainly they had increased, and they were increasing, but admitting that this were the fact—admitting that the ocean was covered with our ships, and that there was no nation which our merchants did not reach—yet these were no reasons why the people of this country should be limited to the food produced within our borders. Hon. Members might mystify as much as they would, they might speechify till doomsday, but they could never get over the fact, that they resisted the repeal of these laws for the purpose of raising the rent of the land, and of stinting the people of this country in the quantity of their food when plenty was offered them. One argument had been used which seemed to him to be an extraordinary one, it was said, that if they injured the agriculturists, they would take away the manufacturers best customers, but he would ask, what kind of customers they must be, who first taxed the manufacturers for means to buy of them? If the advocates of the Corn-laws blinded themselves so, that they could not see this, at least they must admit, that so far from being independent of foreign nations, we were at the present moment materially dependent upon them. Let them take, for instance, the cotton trade. Did hon. Gentlemen not know that the annual quantity of cotton required in England was 1,200,000 bags, and that 200,000 bags were alone grown in our own colonies, leaving a million bags to be supplied by foreigners? Was the House aware that there was not above three months' consumption in the country? And he would ask, what state our manufacturers would be in if for six long months they were deprived of the supply they depended on from abroad? Yet there had been no danger, and there was no fear of danger in the cotton trade—why then should they fear for a supply of corn? If the majority of that House would not entertain the question, and if the people should find that they had nothing to expect at their hands, they would look with a scrutinizing eye upon the constitution of that House. He therefore, for one, went to a division with little fear and with much hope. If, on the one hand, the House should agree to the motion, they would achieve a great present good; but if, on the other hand, they should refuse the committee, the time would not be far distant when there would be such a thorough searching and perfect reform of the House, that its Members would become the real representatives of the people, and the day would soon arrive when the laws would be passed for the benefit of every order of the State, and to secure the happiness and prosperity of all classes.

Mr. *A. Sanford*, after the conclusion of the speech of the hon. Member for Southwark, in which he entirely concurred, would not make one observation more upon that part of the subject; there was, however, another portion of the debate to which he must allude, on which he felt deeply, and on which he was extremely reluctant to address the House. Much observation had been made on both sides as to the declaration of the noble Lord the Secretary of State for the Home Department; and when the noble Lord talked of a fixed duty, he wished to ask him what that duty was intended; not that the noble Lord's answer would have any effect upon his (Mr. Sanford's) vote, as he had fully made up his mind to give a decided negative to the motion; but he was induced to ask the question, because he had given a firm and, he trusted, independent support to her Majesty's Government, and in consequence of the opinion expressed in another place by the noble Lord at the head of the Government. If he thought that the opinion of the noble Lord entirely coincided with a majority of the Cabinet, he would not have put the question; but he was inclined to think that a different opinion was entertained by a majority of the Cabinet, he had thought it a duty which he owed to his constituents, though a painful one to himself, to ask what the noble Lord intended by a fixed duty, and he entreated the noble Lord to answer the question.

Lord *John Russell*, had stated in his former speech that he was in favour of a moderate fixed duty, and he believed that he was right; but having reference to the specific motion of the hon. Member for Wolverhampton, which was one for the House resolving itself into a Committee of the whole House, for the purpose of considering the Act of 9 George 4th, regulating the importation of corn, it was clear that the motion bound neither himself, nor any one who voted for it, to concur in a total repeal. In stating, then, that he was in favour of a moderate fixed duty, he had not felt that under the terms of the present motion it was competent for him to go further; he could do so, but it would take some time, and require the detail of many calculations; and if he had stated any reasons for the amount of duty he would recommend, he should have entered upon a question differing from the proposition which had been made, and would merely have caused a debate relative to any alteration by a total repeal, and to the substitution of a fixed duty. He conceived that the proper place for a discussion of that kind was in a Committee of the House; and if he had now urged it, he would only have interposed a new question between those who were in favour of the present law as it stood, and those who wished to alter it.

Mr. *W. James*, was anxious to state his views upon this important question, that there might not be any misconstruction put on the course he should take by the large and independent agricultural constituency which he had the honour to represent. He would preface the few remarks he meant to make by saying, that the value of landed property in this country, of which settlements had been made, on which mortgages had been granted, and on which annuities had grown up, ought not to be materially altered, except on strong grounds, or from overwhelming necessity. If persons got 3 per cent. from land they thought themselves very fortunate, as the greater portion only paid 2½ per cent. Still he did not think that a free admission of foreign corn, at a moderate fixed duty, would make that alteration in the value of land which hon. Gentlemen dreaded. He had never thought that an alteration of the Corn-laws, for the purpose of imposing such a fixed duty, would be injurious to the agriculturists. He believed, that such an alteration would lead to an improved and better system; for it would procure steady prices which were far preferable to a law which caused almost a famine and enormously high prices at one time, and made them ruinously low at another. He was not prepared to say, that the Corn-laws should be got rid of at one fell swoop, but they ought to have such a constant importation of corn at a moderate duty as would cause a fair and steady price, whilst it did not interfere with the culture of our own soil. We were not, and could not be, independent of foreign countries, nor was it our interests to be entirely independent; for if we were independent, we should have no trade and no commerce, and where would the greatness and glory of England be, if she had no trade and no commerce? The truth was, that we were no more independent of foreign countries than they were of us. Experience further proved that an uniform steady custom and demand regulated the supply, whilst a system of fluctuating duties greatly injured us; for it was absurd to suppose that foreigners would keep a large stock of wheat constantly on hand on the chance of our having a scanty harvest. The great mischief of the labourers and to the country at the present time, and what caused the famine prices—for wheat 70*s*. or 80*s*. now, was equal to wheat 100*s*. or 120*s*, a few years ago—was not so much a deficiency in the late harvest as that there was not abroad a sufficient supply for our demands, owing to our bad Corn-laws. They were told, indeed, that with a low price of bread wages would come down; but he did not want to see a low price of corn; he wished to see all danger of famine dismissed; by opening the trade they would, moreover, raise the price of corn on the continent, and the value of labour would rise. Did any one believe that, with a flourishing state of trade, agricultural wages would not rise? He maintained distinctly that a flourishing state of trade and a depressed state of agriculture could not co-exist. He knew that these arguments were not new—he had used them himself ten years ago, when he seconded a motion for a total repeal of the Corn-laws, but he had become wiser since that time. If the workmen were better paid they would be stronger and would do more work, and the natural consequence would be that there would be more farming produce of all kinds produced and consumed; whereas, if the manufactures failed, a large number of persons would be thrown out of employ and would come upon the land for support. It was therefore clearly the interest of the farmers to have steady prices and a fixed duty. He would conclude by moving an amendment, or rather an addition, to the motion of the hon. Member for Wolverhampton. At the end of the motion he proposed to add the following words:—"With the view not to a total repeal of that law, but of ascertaining whether any and what improvement of it can be effected for the benefit of the agricultural as well as all other classes of the community." The amendment was not seconded.

Mr. *Villiers* then rose to reply. It was his purpose, in bringing forward the motion, to keep as far as possible from dividing those who were of opinion that the Corn-laws were not fitted for the present state of the country. He had received very little encouragement for foregoing his own opinion — he had not introduced his own opinions into the motion, because he wished that all those who wished for a change of the Corn-laws should be enabled to vote with him. He wished that other Members had followed the same course, but throughout he had been met with various propositions, which were only fitted for the committee, and at the very last he was met with an amendment which, if carried, would at once defeat his motion; but as that amendment had not met with a seconder, of course his motion would be that which would be put from the Chair. It was now some years since the question had been fairly discussed; he, therefore, wished to know the grounds upon which the present laws were to be supported; his purpose had, therefore, been in a great measure answered, by the discussion which had taken place. He had not been met fairly on this occasion—the question had not been discussed; it had been made with personalities, and with dry references to statistical details; if they had gone into committee, he would have suggested his reasons for thinking that the system might be changed both wisely and safely. It was objected, that they on his side of the House were not agreed as to the proposition which was to be made in committee. Had they been agreed, where would have been the use of going into committee? The hon. Member for the Tower Hamlets had made a proposal for going into committee, with a view of putting on a fixed duty; that was objected to, because it was said, that many agriculturists would prefer a total repeal of the law. He then brought forward a proposition for the total repeal of the Corn-laws, and he was then told, that this proposition was too strong a one. He had then brought forward the present motion, and now objections were found to it in the same spirit. He would consider that the division of that night would show those who were opposed to all change; and on the other side it would show those who were not pleased with the present state of things. The noble Lord, the Member for Shropshire, had declared it as his opinion, that the agitation against the Corn-laws was produced by a set of desperate men—that it had originated in the vanity and conceit of a set of political economists. The noble Lord was, no doubt, sincere in this declaration, but it was much to be lamented that the most influential class in the kingdom, and those who were called upon to decide the question, should be, by their very station, so far removed from the actual business of the country, and have so little means of forming an accurate judgment on public opinion, as to suppose that the feeling upon this question was the mere result of a set of political economists. The right hon. Baronet opposite (Sir Robert Peel) also had astonished him by the course of his arguments on the present question. The right hon. Baronet's opposition to his (Mr. Villiers's) motion on a former occasion, was, if he rightly remembered, based on his having brought it forward on too narrow a ground. On the present occasion, however, when the larger field was opened to him, the right hon. Baronet confined himself to that narrow ground which he had formerly deprecated. He had solely applied himself to the consideration of the effect of these laws on the manufacturing interest. He could not help thinking that it was a pretext for not going into committee, and that those who voted with the right hon. Baronet would have done better to have candidly avowed that, under any circumstances, they were determined to vote in favour of the law as it was. He would have advised the right hon. Member for Kent (Sir E. Knatchbull) to have said so at once, rather than seeking to impute things to him that he had never said. The right hon. Baronet had charged him, in seeking for a repeal of the Corn-laws, with the ulterior objects of getting rid of the national debt, of sweep-away the aristocracy, and of destroying the Church establishment. Now he denied altogether having any such views, or that he had said anything which furnished the slightest or remotest ground to the right hon. Baronet for making such a charge against him. The hon. Gentleman opposite complained of the proposition for repeal, on the ground that the repeal of the Corn-laws would throw so many farmers and labourers out of occupation. If the whole argument for these laws was, that they kept a large number of farmers in occupation, and of labourers in employment, in what did this differ from any other law affording public employment in which change was proposed? If the stoppage of improvement was not a consequence of superseding occupation in other cases, why should it be so in this? The argument would be equally strong in opposition to all propositions for changes in things as they exist, yet the Legislature was not in the habit of fettering itself in its course of improvement by such considerations. He would not now repeat what had been well done by the Member for Kendal, in showing in what way the right hon. Baronet, the Member for Tamworth, had made a fallacious use of the official documents on which he had laid such stress, and in which it had been shown that the hon. Baronet had compared the years 1837 and 1838, in order to show that the manufacturers were in a flourishing state; and to prove that manufacturers had grossly exaggerated their case. He had shown that the hon. Baronet had only compared the year 1837 and 1838—a year of depression with a year of re-action—whereas, the year 1836, had it been referred to, would have shown that the exports were greater than in 1838. Moreover, the hon. Baronet had not correctly represented the case of the manufacturers, nor had he offered any answer to their case. They alleged that it was the effect of the Corn-laws to prevent them from effecting exchanges with certain countries in Europe which had nothing but their raw products to offer, and that they had in consequence lost the markets of those countries, that food had been rendered artificially low in those countries, and had been rendered artificially high in this country, and thus they had been tempted to manufacture for themselves, and also had in many cases become our rivals in other countries. To this the hon. Baronet had not offered any answer, and the case against the Corn-law in preventing us from exchanging our manufactures with those countries remains as it was stated. The hon. Baronet had also assured the House that there was little occasion to alter these laws, since the people in the manufacturing districts were well off, and he inferred this from the deposits in the savings' banks. Why, he might have quoted the returns which the hon. Baronet had used for his purpose with better effect, to show that the people were better able to save in cheap years than in dear years. The hon. Baronet had compared the years 1828, 1829, 1830, 1831, with 1835, 1836, 1837, and 1838, and he showed there was more farming during the last years than the former ones. Now, the last had been cheaper years than the former ones, but he had forborne to use such facts, knowing them to be extremely fallacious. But he asked what answer had been given to the simple question, why the community were to have a heavy tax laid on its food, which tax yielded nothing to the State, and was for the advantage of a particular class? No public ground had been stated for this, and until the defence of these laws was rested on such ground, or until some national good could be shown to be had in view, he was satisfied the question would never be settled. There was not even any great authority which could be pointed to in support of these laws. Was there any great, or learned, or distinguished person who had ever written in their support?—and, on the contrary, how many could be referred to who had denounced them as bad and unjust? For instance, the most eminent public man of his day was the first to deprecate the law when it was first passed—he alluded to Lord Grenville, a landlord, statesman, Christian, and patriot. He denounced these laws as an offence to God, as an injury to the country, and not a benefit to those who passed it. In what did he farther predict of its consequences that has not occurred? Again, there was one at this day who was devoting his whole mind and talents to the Conservative cause, and desired to maintain the institutions of the country—Dr. Chalmers had said, that the Corn-laws tainted the moral air of this country, that there was no such topic of burning discontent, and that nothing would sweeten the air of British society more than to abolish them. Lastly, let him refer to that great and influential journal that was now the mainstay of the Conservative party, and who desired to restore them to power. Why, that journal said that there was nothing in the East so despotic and cruel as these laws. He wanted to know what the people of England had done that they should be subjected to this frightful burthen. It was out of this Egyptian bondage that he wished to lead the people, and unless their hearts were harder than Pharaoh's they would vote for the motion.

The House divided:—Ayes 195; Noes 342: Majority 147.

List of the AYES.

Abercromby, hn.G.R.
Adam, Admiral
Aglionby, H. A.
Ainsworth, P.
Anson, hon. Colonel
Anson, Sir G.
Attwood, T.
Bainbridge, E. T.
Baines, E.
Bannerman, A.
Baring, F. T.
Barnard, E. G.
Beamish, F. B.
Bellew, R. M.
Berkeley, hon. H.
Berkeley, hon. C.
Bernal, R.
Bewes, T.
Blackett, C.
Blake, W. J.
Blunt, Sir C.
Briscoe, J. J.
Brocklehurst, J.
Brotherton, J.
Brown, R. D.
Buller, C.
Buller, E.
Bulwer, Sir L.
Busfield, W.
Byng, rt. hon. G. S.
Callaghan, D.
Campbell, Sir J.
Clay, W.
Clive, E. B.
Codrington, Admiral
Collier, J.
Collins, W.
Cowper, hon. W. F.
Craig, W. G.
Crawford, W.
Crawley, S.
Currie, R.
Curry, W.
Dalmeny, Lord
Dashwood, G. H.
Dennistoun, J,
D'Eyncourt, rt. hon. C. T.
Divett, E.
Donkin, Sir R. S.
Duke, Sir J.
Duncan, Lord
Duncombe, T.
Dundas, C. W. D.
Dundas, F.
Easthope, J.
Elliot, hon. J. E.
Ellice, Capt. A.
Ellice, rt. hon. E.
Ellice, E.
Etwall, R.
Evans, Sir De L.
Evans, W.
Feilden, W.
Fielden, J.
Fenton, J.
Ferguson, Sir R.
Ferguson, R.
Finch, F.
Fitzroy, Lord C.
Fleetwood, Sir P. H.
Fort, J.
Gibson, T. M.
Gillon, W. D.
Grey, rt. hon. Sir C.
Grey, Sir G.
Grote, G.
Guest, Sir J.
Hall, Sir B.
Harvey, D. W.
Hastie, A.
Hawes, B.
Hawkins, J. H.
Hayter, W. G.
Heathcoat, J.
Hector, C. J.
Hill, Lord A. M. C.
Hindley, C.
Hobhouse, rt.hon.SirJ.
Hobhouse, T. B.
Hollond, R.
Horsman, E.
Howard, F. J.
Howard, P. H.
Howick, Visct.
Humphery, J.
Hutt, W.
Hutton, R.
Jervis, S.
Johnson, General
Kinnaird, hon. A. F.
Labouchere, rt. hn. H.
Lambton, H.
Langdale, hon. C.
Langton, W. G.
Leader, J. T.
Loch, J.
Lushington, C.
Lushington, rt. hn. S.
Lynch, A. H.
Macleod, R.
M'Taggart, J.
Marshall, W.
Marsland, H.
Martin, J.
Maule, hon. F.
Melgund, Lord
Milton, Viscount
Morpeth Viscount
Murray, A.
Murray, rt. hn. J. A.
Muskett, G. A.
Nagle, Sir R.
O'Connell, D.
O'Connell, M. J.
O'Connell, M.
O'Ferrall, R. M.
Ord, W.
Paget, Lord A.
Palmerston, Viscount
Parker, J.
Parker, R. T.
Parnell, rt. hn. Sir H.
Parrott, J.
Pattison, J.
Pechell, Captain
Philips, M.
Philips, G. R.
Phillipotts, J.
Pigot, D. R.
Protheroe, E.
Pryme, G.
Ramsbottom, J.
Rice, E. R.
Rice, rt. hon. T. S.
Rich, H.
Rippon, C.
Roche, E. B.
Roche, W.
Rolfe, Sir R. M.
Rundle, J.
Russell, Lord J.
Russell, Lord
Salwey, Colonel
Scholefield, J.
Scrope, G. P.
Seale, Sir J. H.
Seymour, Lord
Sharpe, General
Shelburne, Earl
Slaney, R. A.
Smith, J. A
Smith, B.
Smith, R. V.
Standish, C.
Stanley, E. J.
Stansfield, W. R. C.
Staunton, Sir G. T.
Steuart, R.
Stewart, J.
Stuart, Lord J.
Stuart, V.
Stock, Dr.
Strickland, Sir G.
Strutt, E.
Style, Sir C.
Tancred, H. W.
Thorneley, T.
Troubridge, Sir E. T.
Turner, E.
Vigors, N. A.
Vivian, J. H.
Wakley, T.
Walker, R.
Wallace, R.
Warburton, H.
Ward, H. G.
Wemyss, J. E,

White, A.
Wild, Sergeant
Williams, W.
Wilshere, W.
Wood, C.
Wood, Sir M.
Wood, G. W.
Yates, J. A.

TELLERS.
Villiers, C. P.
Hume, J.

List of the NOES.

Acheson, Viscount
Acland, Sir T. D.
Acland, T. D.
A'Court, Captain
Adare, Viscount
Aglionby, Major
Alexander, Viscount
Alford, Lord
Alsager, Captain
Alston, R.
Arbuthnott, hon. H.
Archbold, R.
Archdall, M.
Ashley, Lord
Attwood, W.
Attwood, M.
Bagge, W.
Bagot, hon. W.
Bailey, J.
Bailey, J. jun.
Baillie, Colonel
Baker, E.
Baring, hon. W. B.
Barrington, Viscount
Barry, G. S.
Bell, M.
Benett, J.
Bentinck, Lord G.
Berkeley, hon. G.
Bethell, R.
Blackburne, I.
Blackstone, W. S.
Blair, J.
Blake, M. J.
Blakemore, R.
Blandford, Mar. of
Blennerhassett, A.
Bodkin, J. J.
Boldero, H. G.
Bowes, J.
Bradshaw, J.
Bramston, T. W.
Broadley, H.
Broadwood, H.
Brodie, W. B.
Brownrigg, S.
Bruce, Lord E.
Bruen, F.
Bruges, W. H. L.
Buller, Sir J. Y.
Burr, H.
Burrell, Sir C.
Burroughes, H. N.
Byng, G.
Calcraft, J. H.
Campbell, Sir H.
Canning, rt. hon. Sir S.
Cantilupe, Lord
Castlereagh, Viscount
Cavendish, hon. C.
Cavendish, hon. G. H.
Cayley, E. S.
Chapman, A.
Chetwynd, Major
Chichester, J. P. B.
Christopher, R. A.
Chute, W. L. W.
Clayton, Sir W. R.
Clerk, Sir G.
Clive, Lord Viscount
Clive, hon. R. H.
Cole, hon. A. H.
Cole, Viscount
Compton, H. C.
Copeland, Alderman
Corry, hon. H.
Courtenay, P.
Cripps, J.
Crompton, Sir S.
Darby, G.
Darlington, Earl
Denison, W. J.
De Horsey, S. H.
Dick, Q.
D'Israeli, B.
Dottin, A. R.
Douglas, Sir C. E.
Douro, Marquis
Duff, James
Duff, J.
Duffield, T.
Dugdale, W. S.
Dunbar, G.
Duncombe, hon. W.
Duncombe, hon. A.
Du Pre, G.
East, J. B.
Eastnor, Lord
Eaton, R. J.
Egerton, W. T.
Egerton, Sir P.
Eliot, Lord
Ellis, J.
Estcourt, T.
Estcourt, T.
Evans, G.
Farnham, E. B.
Farrand, R.
Fector, J. M.
Fellows, E.
Filmer, Sir E.
Fitzalan, Lord
Fitzgibbon, hon. Col.
Fitzroy, hon. H.
Fitzsimon, N.
Fleming, J.
Foley, E. T.
Forester, hon. G.
Fox, G. L.
French, F.
Freshfield, J. W.
Gaskell, J. M.
Gladstone, W. E.
Glynne, Sir S. R.
Goddard, A.
Gordon, R.
Gordon, Captain
Gore, O. W.
Gore, J. R.
Goring, H. D.
Goulburn, rt. hon. H.
Graham, rt. hn. Sir J.
Granby, Marquess
Grant, hon. Colonel
Grant, F. W.
Grattan, J.
Greene, T.
Greenaway, C.
Grimsditch, T.
Grimston, Viscount
Grimston, hon. E. H.
Halford, H.
Handley, H.
Harcourt, G. S.
Hardinge, right hon. Sir H.
Harland, W. C.
Hawkes, T.
Heathcote, Sir G.
Heathcote, Sir W.
Heathcote, J.
Heneage, G. W.
Heneage, E.
Henniker, Lord
Hepburn, Sir T. B.
Herbert, hon. S.
Herries, rt. hon. J. C.
Hill, Sir R.
Hillsborough, Earl
Hinde, J. H.
Hodges, T. L.
Hodgson, F.
Hodgson, R.
Hogg, J. W.
Holmes, hn. W. A.
Holmes, W.
Hope, hon. C.
Hope, H. T.
Hope, G. W.
Hoskins, K.
Hotham, Lord
Houldsworth, T.
Houstoun, G.
Howard, Sir R.
Howard, hon. W.
Hurst, R. H.
Hurt, F.
Ingestrie, Visct.
Irton, S.
Irving, J.
James, Sir W. C.
Jenkins, Sir R.
Johnstone, H.
Jones, J.
Jones, Captain
Kemble, H.
Ker, D.
Kirk, P.
Knatchbull, hon. Sir E.
Knight, H. G.
Knightley, Sir C.
Knox, hon. T.
Lascelles, hon. W. S.
Law, hon. C. E.
Lefevre, C. S.
Lefroy, rt. hon. T.
Lemon, Sir C.
Lennox, Lord G.
Lennox, Lord A.
Liddell, hon. H. T.
Lincoln, Earl of
Lockhart, A. M.
Long, W.
Lowther, hon. Colonel
Lowther, J. H.
Lucas, E.
Lygon, hon. General
Mackenzie, T.
Mackenzie, W. F.
Mackinnon, W. A.
Macnamara, Major
Maher, J.
Mahon, Viscount
Maidstone, Viscount
Manners, Lord C.
Marsland, T.
Marton, G.
Master, T. W. C.
Maunsell, T. P.
Maxwell, hon. S. R.
Meynell, Captain
Miles, W.
Miles, P. W. S.
Miller, W. H.
Milnes, R. M.
Monypenny, T. G.
Mordaunt, Sir J.
Moreton, hon. A. H.
Morgan, C. M. R.
Neeld, J.
Neeld, J.
Nicholl, J.
Noel, W. M.
Norreys, Lord
O'Brien, C.
O'Brien, W. S.
O'Conor, Don
O'Neil, hon. J. B. R.
Ossulston, Lord
Owen, Sir J.
Packe, C. W.
Paget, F.
Pakington, J. S.
Palmer, C. F.
Palmer, R.
Palmer, G.
Parker, M.
Parker, T. A. W.
Patten, J. W.
Pease, J.
Peel, rt. hon. Sir R.
Peel, J.

Pemberton, T.
Pendarves, E. W. W.
Perceval, Colonel
Perceval, hon. G. J.
Philipps, Sir R.
Pigot, R.
Pinney, W.
Planta, rt. hon. J.
Plumptre, J. P.
Polhill, F.
Pollen, Sir J. W.
Pollock, Sir F.
Powell, Colonel
Power, J.
Power, J.
Powerscourt, Visct.
Praed, W. M.
Praed, W. T.
Price, Sir R.
Price, R.
Pringle, A.
Pryse, P.
Pusey, P.
Rae, rt. hon. Sir W.
Reid, Sir J. R.
Richards, R.
Rickford, W.
Rolleston, L.
Round, C. G.
Round, J.
Rushbrooke, Colonel
Russell, Lord C
St. Paul, H.
Sanderson, R.
Sandon, Visct.
Sanford, E. A.
Scarlett, hon. J. Y.
Shaw, rt. hon. F.
Sheil, R. L.
Sheppard, T.
Shirley, E. J.
Sibthorp, Colonel
Sinclair, Sir G.
Smith, A.
Smyth, Sir G. H.
Somerset, Lord G.
Spry, Sir S. T.
Stanley, E.
Stanley, Lord
Stanley, M.
Stanley, W. O.
Stormont, Visct.
Strangways, hon. J.
Sturt, H. C.
Surrey, Earl of
Teignmouth, Lord
Tennent, J. E.
Thomas, Colonel H.
Thompson, Alderman
Thornhill, G.
Tollemache, F. J.
Townley, R. G.
Trench, Sir F.
Tyrrell, Sir J. T.
Vere, Sir C. B.
Verner, Colonel
Vernon, G. H.
Villiers, Lord
Vivian, J. E.
Waddington, H. S.
Wall, C. B.
Walsh, Sir J.
Welby, G. E.
Westenra, hon. H. R.
Westenra, hon. J. C.
Whitmore, T. C.
Wilbraham, G.
Wilkins, W.
Williams, R.
Williams, T. P.
Williams, W. A.
Wilmot, Sir J. E.
Winnington, T. E.
Winnington, H. J.
Wodehouse, E.
Wood, Colonel T.
Wood, T.
Worsley, Lord
Wyndham, W.
Yorke, hon. E. T.
Young, J.
Young, Sir W.

TELLERS.

Baring, H.
Fremantle, Sir T.

Paired off.

Ashley, hon. H.	Childers, J. W.
Barneby, J.	Blewitt, R. J.
Bateson, Sir R.	Roche, Sir D.
Cartwright, W. R.	Colquhoun, J. C.
Codrington, C. W.	Conyngham, Lord A.
Cooper, J. E.	White, L.
Coote, Sir C.	Brabazon, Lord
Cresswell, C.	Erle, W.
Crewe, Sir G.	Edwards, Sir J.
Dalrymple, Sir A.	Vivian, rt. hon. Sir H.
Damer, hon. G. D.	Grosvenor, Lord R.
Davenport, J.	Molesworth, Sir W.
Dungannon, Viscount	Wyse, T.
Hale, R. B.	O'Callaghan, hon. C.
Hayes, Sir E.	O'Connell, M.
Inglis, Sir R. H.	Lister, E. C.
Jackson, Sergeant	Jervis, J.
Jermyn, Lord	Chester, H.
Jones, W.	Walker, C. A.
Lowther, Lord	Bentinck, Lord W.
Maclean, D.	Talfourd, Serjeant
Mathew, Captain	Verney, Sir H.
Rose, rt. hon. Sir G.	Talbot, J. H.
Stewart, J.	Hallyburton, Lord D.
Trevor, hon. G. R.	Colquhoun, Sir J.
Wilbraham, hon. B.	Bridgeman, H.
Wynn, rt. hon. C. W.	Buller, hon. P.
Wynn, Sir W.	Thomson, rt. hn. C.P.
Ferguson, Sir R.	Somerville, Sir W.
Grattan, H.	Norreys, Sir D.
Mildway, P. St. John	Ponsonby, hon. J.
Smith, G.	Rumbold, C. E.

Absent.

Andover, Lord
Barron, W.
Brabazon, Sir W.
Bryan, Captain
Campbell, W. F.
Cave, R. O.
Chalmers, P.
Chapman, Sir M. L.
Clements, Lord
Davies, Colonel
Dundas, hon. J.
Dunlop, Sir J. (ill)
Euston, Lord
Ewart, W.
Fazakerly, N.
Fitzpatrick, J. W.
Heron, Sir R.
James, W.
Leveson, Lord
Martin, J. B.
Morris, D.
O'Connell, J.
Ponsonby, hon. C.
Redington, T. N.
Somers, J. P.
Speirs, A.
Spencer, hon. Captain
Talbot, C. R. M.
Turner, W. (ill)
Vivian, Major
White, S.
White, H.
Wrightson, W. B.
Baring, hon. F.
Bolling, W.
Burdett, Sir F. (ill)
Dowdeswell, W.
Conolly, Colonel
Egerton, Lord F. (ill)
Follett, Sir W. (ill)
Godson, R. (circuit)
Harcourt, G. G. V. (abroad)
Hughes, B.
Ingham, R. (circuit)
Kelly, F. (circuit)
Kerrison, Sir E. (ill)
Litton, E.
Rushout, G. (ill)
Sugden, Sir E, (ill)

Analysis of the Division.

For the motion (tellers included) - -	197
Against (tellers included) - - -	344
Pairs (32) - - - - - -	64
Ministerialists absent - - -	33
Conservatives absent - - -	16
Vacant—Richmond, Devonshire, Leicester	3
Speaker - - - - -	1
	658

THE DUKE OF WELLINGTON'S ANNUITY ACT.] The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* said, that the bill which he wished to introduce was almost of a formal nature, and was brought forward with the consent of the noble Duke to whom it referred, and he had no doubt would meet with the unanimous consent of the House. The object of the bill was of a very simple description. Under the Acts granting certain annuities to Field-marshal the Duke of

Wellington, provision was made authorising the Duke to make, on the marriage of his daughters, if he should have any, certain charges on the estate, and also an annuity to the Duchess to the amount of 2,000*l.* per annum. No such provision, however, was necessary at present, and the object of the present bill was to enable the noble Duke to charge a jointure on the estate on the marriage of his eldest son and heir apparent, for which by some oversight no provision was made. The bill also contained a provision by which the objects of value presented to him by foreign Powers were made heir looms and settled with the title in the same manner that the English rewards had been settled. He begged to move for leave to bring in the bill.

Leave given. Bill brought in and read a first time.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Tuesday, March 19, 1839.

MINUTES.] Petitions presented. By Earl STANHOPE, from Lewes, against any Alteration in the Beer-laws.—By the Earl of BANDON, from places in the county of Cork, against any Alteration in the Corn-laws.—By Lord BROUGHAM, from the Licensed Victuallers of several places, against the Beer-laws.—By the Marquess of LANSDOWNE, from Trowbridge and Frome, against the Truck system.—By the Marquess of BUTE, from several places, for Church Extension in Scotland.

AFFAIRS IN THE EAST.] The Earl of *Aberdeen* had stated yesterday, that he would move for the production of papers which were indispensably necessary for understanding our relations in the East. There were two parts of this question as distinct as peace and war could make them; the one related to Persia, and the other to the countries of Affghanistan. With respect to Persia, he did not intend to say a syllable; he would make no speech, and he asked for no papers. The House had been informed in the Speech from the Throne, that "differences which had arisen had occasioned the retirement of her Majesty's minister from the court of Teheran; but that her Majesty indulged the hope of learning that a satisfactory adjustment of these differences would allow of the re-establishment of her Majesty's relations with Persia upon their former footing of friendship." He supposed that those negotiations were still proceeding, and that they had not been interrupted. He was not aware, however, that they bore a very propitious aspect, for not only had our minister retired from that country, but every member of the mission had also left; and when they also knew that a portion of the Persian territory, taken possession of by others, had been retained by us, he thought there must be an end to those arguments usually resorted to on such occasions. He hoped, however, that the adjustment which had been looked forward to would take place, especially as he believed there was no ground of difference either existing now, or had ever existed, which did not admit of adjustment, and the sooner this was done the better. With respect to the other part, the affairs of Affghanistan, the question was very different, for we were at war there, and had been since the month of October; and it did not seem to be very unreasonable that their Lordships should know what we were fighting about, and the causes that had brought us into this condition. It was true, that the noble Viscount had produced fourteen or fifteen treaties which might be invaluable for the collection of Mr. Marten's, but they did not afford any material information. They could only look to the manifesto of the Governor-general, which he had sent forth to the world, and which had been communicated to that House; and what led him to make any observation upon it was, that he wished the noble Viscount to understand that much explanation would be required before he could accept that declaration, which was, of course, partial, as a justification of the policy which had been adopted; and he must say, that judging by that exposition alone, he had never seen a document which required more explanation, or which appeared so much to justify the worst imputations that had ever been cast on our Eastern policy. It was to be considered as a favourable statement, issued by the Governor-general to justify his future course; and no man could say, unless it were subsequently explained, this course was not as rash and impolitic, as it was ill-considered, oppressive, and unjust. It was possible, however, that his opinion might be modified by what might be produced hereafter. He would move, in the first instance, for copies of any correspondence which had passed with the court of Caubul and the rulers of Affghanistan, previous to the proclamation of the Governor-general on the 1st of October 1838.

Viscount *Melbourne* said, with respect to the first part of the observations of the noble Earl, so far as they related to Persia, he did not mean to go further into them than to say, he entirely agreed with the sentiments expressed by the noble Lord, that there was nothing in the present state of affairs there, or of our differences, which did not admit of adjustment, and he earnestly hoped and trusted that the differences would be peaceably settled and adjusted. With regard to the second section of the noble Lord's observations, he thought, that considering it possible that the opinions the noble Lord had expressed might be modified by further information, it would have been somewhat more fair, somewhat more prudent, somewhat more just altogether, somewhat more just towards the country to which the noble Lord belonged, and somewhat more just especially towards those who had the conduct of the affairs of government, if the noble Lord had abstained from declaring those opinions so freely and so prematurely. The noble Lord professed not to give any opinion upon the declaration of the Governor-general, and yet he said he never saw a declaration that went further to justify the worst imputations upon the policy of this country in that part of the world than this. Now when they considered the extent of the imputations which had been cast upon our Government in that quarter, he thought that the noble Lord was pronouncing a rather strong opinion, bearing in mind also, that the noble Lord at the same time admitted, that he did not understand the true state of affairs. It was a proof of what had been the case throughout the late war, when noble Lords who sat on the opposite side of the House were too apt to forget, for the sake of party advantage, all regard for the real interests of the country. He had asked for, and he expected the noble Lord would have furnished him with, a list of the papers he wished to be produced, that he might have an opportunity for minutely examining them—of making inquiry respecting them, and of considering whether they ought, or ought not to be produced. If the noble Lord would let him have that list, and delay his motion for a day or two, he (Viscount Melbourne) should be enabled to state what his opinions were upon the subject.

The Earl of *Aberdeen* had one word to say in explanation. If the noble Viscount did not permit him to make any observation on the proclamation of the Governor-general, why did the noble Lord lay the document on the Table of the House? If he did not mean it to be commented upon, for what did he produce it? If the noble Lord intended that their Lordships should be silent upon that declaration, he ought not to have given the information. A Government might, no doubt, produce too much, as well as too little, and if that declaration had not been on the table, he would not have said a word about it; but being there, it was monstrous to suppose that it was not to be commented on, that they were not to express their opinion of its character. He was very happy to find that the noble Viscount had learnt since he had sat on the Ministerial side of the House, what the duties were of those who sat on the opposite side. He denied that he had stated anything which that delaration did not justify, and did not call for. It was possible, from this mode of producing papers—giving portions at one time, and portions at another—that those portions which had to come might modify the opinion to be formed of those which had been produced. It was an excess of imprudence, perhaps, to say, that if he were called on to pronounce his opinion of the policy pursued by the Governor-general, or the defence set up by its author, he must have no hesitation in condemning it, as most unjust and oppressive, so far as appeared from the statement of the Governor-general himself; but if it were so, those documents which the Government had withheld must be of a most extraordinary character, contradicting their own documents, and more favourable than them to their own conduct.

The Duke of *Wellington* thought that all the information with respect to Persia, since the mission of Mr. Ellis, should be laid on the Table of the House.

Viscount *Melbourne* said, that if the noble Duke would make a motion on the subject, he would give it his best consideration.

The Duke of *Wellington* declined to make any motion; he merely threw out the remark for the consideration of the noble Lord.

Lord *Ellenborough* said, that the House had been sitting for more than two months, and surely the noble Lord had had time to lay the papers on the Table of the House, or at least to consider what papers should be produced on a subject which must necessarily attract a great deal of observation in Parliament, and to which special reference had been made in the speech from the Throne.

Lord *Brougham* said, that on the very first night of the Session he had made some observations, which came under the same category of objection as had been advanced against the noble Earl. There was much truth in the saying, that the person who was his own advocate had not always the wisest man for his client, and he thought that the exposition of the Governor-general did not go against the proverb; his defence of his only policy was no exception to the general rule. There was no expediency in the policy which he had pursued; there was no justice in the policy which he had pursued; it was in complete dereliction of every ordinary rule of reason. The declaration in the Governor-general's proclamation, that because Persia had behaved ill, it was necessary to dethrone the King of Caubul, put him in mind of a quotation used by the noble Lord, the Governor-general, in a speech of his own, when he used this illustration—"You may well say, that it is Stoney Stratford, for I was never so bitten by fleas in my life." The one was as bad logic as the other. In his opinion, such a proclamation ought not to have been published; it was, he believed, contrary to the usual course in India. The noble Viscount was very free in his advice as to the duties of noble Lords on the opposite side of the House; but the noble Viscount seemed to have forgotten on that (the Ministerial) side the duties he learnt on the other; and when he again sat on the opposite side—how soon that might be he (Lord Brougham) could not tell—he would doubtless forget again the advice as to those duties which he had given from his present side.

Viscount *Melbourne* had complained of his noble and learned Friend on the first day of the Session for pronouncing judgment, and for having made up his mind upon a case without waiting for any information; but his complaint against the noble Earl was of a very different nature—he complained that the noble Earl, after having read some papers, pronounced a strong opinion, though he admitted that he had not made up his mind, and that subsequent information might cause him to alter his sentiments. With respect to the proclamation, the noble and learned Lord found fault with its terms, and he also found fault with its publication. He did not know whether that course were usual in Indian affairs, but they must leave the propriety of ordering the publication to the determination of the Governor-general, who had a better opportunity of forming a judgment as to its expediency than their Lordships; and, in the absence of information, he trusted to the indulgence and allowance of the House not to condemn the Governor-general's conduct. As to what he should do when he was on the other side of the House, it would be quite time enough to settle when he got there.

Lord *Brougham* quite agreed with the noble Viscount in his last observation; and he would no doubt fulfil his intentions when he got on the other side; for the noble Viscount would never address his mind to the consideration of that point till he should be compelled by necessity. He had not objected to the publication of the declaration, but to the thing published; his objection was not to the manner of doing it, but to the thing done.

Lord *Ellenborough* said, there were two questions arising out of the conduct of the Governor-general in India; one was, whether it was justifiable, and the other was, whether it was politic. They might assume, from the evidence already produced, that the conduct was a folly; it remained for the evidence to be produced, to determine whether it were a crime.

The Earl of *Ripon* said, that not only our Minister at the Court of Teheran, but also that the different members of the mission had quitted Persia, and that we had likewise taken forcible possession of the Island of Karak. He wished, therefore, to ask, whether Sir Henry Bethune—who was styled a Major-general in Persia, though he believed, that he did not hold that rank in England, and who had received a salary of £.2,000 a-year from England, and the assistance of some engineers, for the purpose of assisting Persia and teaching her soldiers, notwithstanding the removal of our Minister, notwithstanding the withdrawal of the other members of the mission, and notwithstanding the differences which existed—would still assist Persia, and would still receive from this country £.2,000 a-year salary?

Viscount *Melbourne* said, that whether the officer alluded to had actually withdrawn from the service or not, he could not tell; but unquestionably, if the differences were not settled, the salary would cease.

Motion withdrawn.

Hand-loom Weavers.] The Marquess of *Lansdowne* presented petitions from the hand-loom weavers of Troubridge and Frome, in the county of Wilts, complaining of the distress to which they were subject. He was sure, that after noble Lords had read the reports of the hand-loom commissioners they would consent to afford any remedy which could consistently with the other interests of the country, be applied. There had been many remedies suggested to which their Lordships might object, but there was one to which that House had always been disposed to lend a ready ear. The continued suffering produced by the truck system, which deprived the labourers of a great portion of their means, and caused them to submit to additional privations, had induced their Lordships to consent to an Act which had provided a remedy for that evil. The labourers had now a great advantage within their own power, for they might sue for the whole amount of their wages, and the master could not set off any portion of goods furnished. To the petitions he had the honour to present, there was no one subscribing name connected with the trades' unions, that existed in those places, they had kept aloof from these illegal and dangerous proceedings, and they came before that House to pray for their Lordships' serious consideration.

Lord *Brougham* believed nothing could exceed the amount of distress and privation under which the petitioners had suffered. At the same time, with reference to the truck system, he must say, that the same remedy which had been afforded to the manufacturing labourer ought to be extended to the agricultural labourer—for he had heard from a noble Friend, intimately acquainted with an agricultural county, that some of the farmers paid their labourers in kind; that is, they gave them wares instead of money, just as had been done in Staffordshire. They gave the labourers, for instance, two quartern loaves instead of 1*s*., 1*s*. 2*d*., or 1*s*. 6*d*. as the case might be. The loaves might be of good weight, but they were frequently made of bad flour; that, in fact, the farmers used up their damaged and unsaleable wheat. Any thing more to be reprobated or discouraged there could not be. What he had detailed had come to his knowledge direct from Devonshire; but he believed, that the same system was pursued in the neighbouring county of Somerset. He must, however, declare, notwithstanding the pleasure he knew his declaration would give to the noble Earl opposite (Earl Stanhope), that though the regulations of the new Poor-law were, in his opinion, wise, useful, and salutary, yet that the effect of this measure had necessarily been to render the condition of the hand-loom weavers worse than it was under the old law.

Earl *Stanhope* knew, that the hand-loom weavers were obliged to work fourteen or sixteen hours a day, and at what wages? Why if they were paid in money, they would not get 5*s*. a week. The noble and learned Lord who had made so many eloquent appeals against negro slavery, should know that the negro slaves earned more, according to the value of money in the colonies, than what the unfortunate hand-loom weavers could earn. Unless the commission of inquiry into the condition of the hand-loom weavers was to be a mere delusion, they must apply a much more effectual remedy to the distress of these labourers than a simple alteration of the truck system.

The Earl of *Haddington* agreed in the objections which had been urged by the noble Marquess and the noble and learned Lord against the truck system. He knew of his own knowledge, that in the counties which had been referred to, many of the women were engaged in the manufacture of lace, and he believed, that they were paid by a system of truck—that is, that the grocers and others who took the lace obliged the women to take in exchange their own goods, some of which they might not require, and he did not see how the remedies which had been passed could be applied by these women.

Earl *Stanhope* wished to call the attention of noble Lords to the pith of the petition. The petitioners stated the evil effects of power-loom machinery, to which they ascribed their own loss of employment; and they stated, that whenever the value of labour sunk, the value of agricultural produce would fall—a sentiment in which he fully concurred.

The petitions were laid on the Table.

Insolvents' Advertisements.] Lord

Ellenborough wished to call the attention of the noble and learned Lord on the woolsack and the noble and learned Lord opposite, to what had passed at the end of the last Session relating to a clause in the Imprisonment for Debt Bill, which compelled the proprietors of newspapers to insert the advertisements in insolvent cases, however long, for the small sum of 2*s.* 6*d.* He thought, that it was promised when the bill was passed, that a measure should be introduced in the early part of the present Session to relieve the proprietors from the burden of the insertion of advertisements inconveniently long for so small a sum.

The *Lord Chancellor* said, that as to making the proprietors publish insolvents' advertisements for a certain sum, there was the same provisions in the old Act as in the new. He could not, however, recollect any promise or any intimation, that any measure would be introduced to repeal or to alter this clause.

Subject dropped.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Tuesday, March 19, 1838.

MINUTES.] Bill. Read a second time:—Copyholds; Duke of Wellington's Estate.

Petitions presented. By Mr. LAW, from the city of London, to be heard by counsel at the Bar of the House against the City Police Bill.

SMALL DEBTS BILLS.] Mr. *Hawes* moved, that the order to commit any bill for the recovery of small debts be discharged, and that no such bill be committed until the 8th day of April next. There were many Small Debts bills now before the House, and it was exceedingly important that they should be uniform in their provisions. The object of his present motion was to postpone any determination upon their enactments until after the House had determined upon the course it intended to pursue relative to the County Courts Bill, introduced by the noble Lord the Secretary for the Home Department, which might in some instances avoid the necessity of the local bills being passed at all. Many of the bills contained provisions in reference to different localities which were of a conflicting nature, and such as to prevent all uniformity in the practice.

Mr. *W. Evans* thought that it would be unjust to accede to this proposition, because the rights of parties who had, at considerable cost, procured the introduction of bills to the House, would be concluded without a due regard being had to their interests. The bills had, in many instances, been introduced before that of the noble Lord had been determined on.

Sir *J. Buller* supported the motion, and would go even further than the hon. Member for Lambeth, in recommending the House to proceed no further with any of those local bills this Session. It was most important that they should all agree in their provisions, and it would be a useless outlay of money for the parties interested to carry their measures any further, when they might be rendered unnecessary by the adoption of the bill of the noble Lord. The expenses already incurred were unnecessary, because the parties had notice of the noble Lord's bill. If the noble Lord's bill should pass, he would agree with the hon. Member in putting a stop to all bills of this description.

Mr. *Freshfield* said, that the House had as yet received no assurance that the measure which had been introduced by the Government would be pressed on, or would be proceeded with at all; and he thought that some statement of the views of the noble Lord upon the subject should be made. It would be unjust to the parties that they should lose the money which they had spent, without the benefit to which they were entitled being secured to them.

Lord *John Russell* said, that he, of course, could say nothing as to the probability of any measure passing that House; but he must say, that the parties by whom these bills had been introduced had had abundant notice of his intention to introduce the general measure now before the House. He stated the principle of the bill last year, and this Session he had not only brought it in as early as possible, but he had taken care to separate the Small Debts Bill from other provisions to which some objections were likely to be made, and which might impede its progress. The only question for the House, as it appeared to him, was whether they would allow a number of these separate bills to go through committee, when there was a general measure before Parliament upon the same subject. Those bills had always been objected to by his hon. and learned Friend the Attorney-General, and he thought properly so, on account of the various enactments which it was proposed they should contain—for while one bill provided that a party might be imprisoned for twenty-one days, another proposed a term of imprisonment of sixty days' duration. If the hon. Member for Lambeth should press his motion, therefore, he should feel himself bound to give it his support.

Captain *Pechell* said, that the hon. Members who had opposed this motion might rest satisfied as to no pains being lost to procure a general measure being passed, because if that of the noble Lord were to fail, he should introduce again a bill which had passed this House last Session, and, by mistake, was thrown out in the other House of Parliament.

Motion agreed to.

Poor-Law Amendment Act.] Sir *E. Knatchbull* said, that the noble Lord (Lord John Russell), in his statement of the course of public business yesterday, had not stated that it was his intention to bring in any measure to amend the provisions of the Poor-Law Amendment Act. He begged to recommend that if any such measure were proposed to be introduced, it would be exceedingly important that it should be brought before the House at as early a period as possible. He desired, also, to ask the noble Lord whether it were intended to lay before the House any general regulations of the Poor-law Commissioners under the provisions of the existing Act?

Lord *John Russell* said, that he should certainly lay the general regulations of the Commissioners upon the Table of the House. As to the first point in the observations of the right hon. Baronet, he could only say, that he did not think that it would be in his power to bring in any Bill with respect to the amendment of the existing law very early in the Session, as he had not been able yet to proceed with many of the bills before the House. He might now state, as a question upon the subject had before been asked, that in the bill which he intended to introduce he did not mean to make any provisions affecting the operations of those parishes governed by local Acts.

Subject dropped.

Railway Commission (Ireland).] Colonel *Perceval* begged to inquire of the noble Lord why the circumstances under which the Commission for forming railways in Ireland had been first appointed had been altered in the commission newly made? The paragraph which had been omitted was to the effect that the commission was appointed in order to ascertain the best lines of railway between the principal places in Ireland which it might be advisable to connect by railway, and in reference to which joint-stock companies hereafter might be willing to apply to Parliament that they might be pleased to give permission that the survey might be made. This sentence had been omitted in the second commission.

Lord *John Russell* said, that the commission originally granted, stated the grounds on which it had issued, but that upon a new one being framed it was not customary again to set forth the grounds, but only to state, that the commission appointed had expired. In what was essential, namely the points upon which the inquiry was made, the hon. Member would see that the form used was exactly the same as that first used.

Sir *Robert Peel* remarked, that the first commission appeared to recognise the principle of Joint-stock companies being formed, as a condition upon which public aid should be granted. That this should be omitted in the second commission was somewhat extraordinary.

Lord *John Russell:* The first commission set out that the inquiry was instituted by command of his late Majesty upon the address of the House of Lords; and then it went on to direct them to inquire into certain points not alluding at all to Joint-stock companies. In the second commission, the former inquiry was recited, and it was provided that a new one should be instituted.

Subject dropped.

Education in Ireland.] Mr. *James Grattan* rose to call the attention of the House to the subject of the monies voted by Parliament for education in Ireland. The board by which the distribution of the money had been made had been in existence during a period of eight years, and had expended a sum of 264,000*l.*; but, although he had examined all the returns and reports which had been made, he was unable to discover any instance in which they had established a school from which any lasting advantages were likely to arise. He conceived that they had proceeded upon erroneous principles, and that, instead of distributing their assistance in the most indiscriminate manner, they should have employed it in the establishment of model schools, from which the most happy results might have proceeded. An annual grant of 50,000*l.* was no doubt sufficient for the establishment of a general system of schools in Ireland, but was certainly not sufficient to effect what had seemed to be the object of the board—namely, to extend education to all classes of persons, He had, therefore, to charge them with giving aid in the most indiscriminate and injudicious manner—in giving aid to schools which were wholly unworthy of it—schools, the masters of which received no higher a salary than 8*l.* a-year. He was far from saying that they had been guilty of peculation, or that there had been any misappropriation of the funds ; but he did mean to say that those funds had been most unwisely, insufficiently, and incomprehensibly disposed of. Great inequality and unfairness had been shown in the amount of grants to different schools. The intention of the House was to institute a united system of education, and to exclude clergymen from any share in the management of the schools ; in place of that there were 260 of the schools established in nunneries, monasteries, and chapels—while there were no less than 360 clergymen receiving grants as patrons of schools. A project was now entertained of establishing agricultural schools, but he apprehended very little benefit from them, as long at least as the board was allowed to continue acting as he had described. The House ought to be informed that Mr. Carlisle the paid member of the Board—Mr. Kennedy, whom all in that House knew, had both left the Board. Dr. M'Arthur the manager of the model school had also resigned. How was this ? Surely under these circumstances, they were justified in asking the noble Lord (Lord Morpeth) what had been the causes of many of the proceedings of the Board—of the changes that had taken place from time to time in the constitution of the Board. It was time for the public to open their eyes, and to see what principle had guided the official distributors of this money ; for it certainly did appear to him that the Board had been highly criminal in not adhering to the rules laid down when they were first constituted, to guide their proceedings in regard to the distribution. The hon. Member concluded by moving for returns " Of all sums paid by the Irish National Board of Education, specifying the items and expenditure, the names and numbers of the schools, and the names of their patrons, whether Protestants or Catholics, clergymen or laymen, and whether they had previously received aid from any other Board, or from individuals ; also specifying the number of each denomination, Protestant or Catholic, in the several schools."

Viscount *Morpeth* would not undertake to decide whether the speech of his hon. friend or his motion had been dictated by a desire to damage the national system of education in Ireland, and to check its further progress; but this he must say, that he could not acquit it of all tendency to so prejudicial a course, for his hon. Friend must be aware that the censures or cavils of those who were held to be friendly to any system of things, would always outweigh the most vehement attacks of its professed enemies. He did not see that the nature of his hon. Friend's motion, or the scope of the speech with which he had prefaced it, called on him (Lord Morpeth) to enter into any defence of the principle on which the national system of Education in Ireland proceeded. There had been, it was true, considerable hostility to the system, as well in England as in some parts of Ireland ; but as it had received the sanction of successive governments, and as the House had annually voted a large sum for its maintenance, he did think, unless that sanction were withdrawn, or those votes discontinued, he would be justified in assuming that Parliament was prepared to alter or abrogate that system. But his hon. Friend had found fault with the mode in which the principle of the system had been carried into effect ; and his principal charge was, that the great object of the plan, that of establishing an universal and united system of education, had totally failed. This was a charge not confined to the hon. Gentleman, it had been reiterated in many quarters before. There could be no doubt that the hope with which the system was originally projected by the noble Lord opposite—a hope in which the present Government still continued to indulge—was, that it should be one of united education. It had been at one time denounced, it was true, by several members of the established church, and by some of the Presbyterian clergy, and, within more recent times, by smaller numbers, with similar vehemence, of the members of the Roman Catholic church. But while he was aware of this, he consoled himself by looking at the numbers, and still more the character, of those that remained of all denominations favourable to the system. Such, however was the original intention of the projectors of the national system of education, and he felt it to be the duty of Government to afford every facility and support towards the completion of that original plan. The State had done, and would do, what in it lay; but it had not, and upon the whole he rejoiced that it had not, any compulsory power to carry its objects into effect: all it could do was to put the means within the grasp of all parties. He was bound to say that the object of the plan—the system of united education—had not met with all the success that could have been desired for it; but to say, that it had utterly failed, was a misrepresentation. There was a difficulty with regard to the data on which the question would have to be decided—a difficulty which would lead him to object to that portion of the returns moved for by the hon. Gentleman, which related to the difference of the religious persuasion of the children. The fact was, that to ascertain those differences of opinion was no part of the business of the masters of the schools: any demonstration of that kind was opposed to the principle on which the system was founded, and was disclaimed in practice by those who had the working of it out. No questions of that sort were necessarily put to the children, and the board were not, therefore, in possession of any accurate data from which such a return could be compiled. Notwithstanding this general deficiency, however, he had the means of showing the working of the plan in the province of Ulster. In consequence of attacks made two years ago, on the system on the score of its being too exclusively Catholic, his friend Mr. Carlisle, one of the commissioners, who had extensive connexions in the province of Ulster, obtained, through their means, lists which afforded a view of the state of the schools of that province. It appeared that the whole number of schools in Ulster was 504. The number as to which returns were made of the religious distinctions of the children in attendance was 371. Of schools in which there were no Protestants there were only 31; whilst of those in which there were no Catholics, there were 40. Thus, out of 371 schools, 300 were attended promiscuously by both Catholics and Protestants; and of the whole number of children attending the schools in Ulster, the Protestants were 14,628, and the Catholics were 22,455, or a very fair proportion, according to the respective proportions of Catholics and Protestants in the population of that province. Surely this simple statement of facts gave a sufficient contradiction to the charge which had been made—that whereas in the south-west of Ireland these schools were attended exclusively by Catholics, in Ulster they were attended by Protestants only. He repeated that as an united system of education, the scheme of the national board might not have been so generally effective as its projectors expected it would have been; but he could, from his own personal observation, say it had realised the most satisfactory results wherever fair play had been given to it, under the superintendance of judicious Protestant proprietors and clergymen who were not of opinion that their chief religious duty consisted in carrying out the education of the Roman Catholic children on principles to which their parents entertained conscientious objections. The noble Lord read a letter from a clergyman in Monaghan, in which he stated the advantageous result that had followed the cordial co-operation of clergymen and laymen of all denominations—of Roman Catholic bishops with Presbyterians and Protestant clergymen of the established church—in the establishment of schools on the principles of the national board. In his parish upwards of 1000 children of both denominations attended these schools. There was every intention, the noble Lord proceeded to say, on the part of Government, to hold out fair play to all parties, and at the same time to supply to children of all religious denominations, such spiritual instruction as their parents wished them to receive. United education had been afforded in very many instances, and where the system had failed to effect that, the next best thing was attained—separate education. To this result the matter would come, if the system were to be done away with; for, surely, Protestants would not deny that Catholic children ought to be educated, nor would Catholics deny to Protestants the same option. The hon. Gentleman also complained of the mode in which the board had distributed the funds intrusted to their charge. He was sure the board had acted for the best in the discharge of the duty intrusted to them. The hon. Gentleman also complained that the board had made their aid too universal, instead of confining their operations to the establishment of model-schools for the rest. Now he (Lord Morpeth) was of opinion, that education ought to be brought home to every door, and, if possible, to every cabin in Ireland. He admitted that many of the masters of the existing schools were inadequate to the high trust which they had to fulfil. The fifth report of the commissioners of national education in Ireland, just laid on the Table, contained the following statement of their regulations with regard to the establishment of normal schools;—

"The appointment of teachers rests with the local patrons and committees of schools. But the commissioners are to be satisfied of the fitness of each, both as to character and general qualification. He should be a person of Christian sentiment, of calm temper and discretion; he should be imbued with a spirit of peace, of obedience to the law, and loyalty to his Sovereign; he should not only possess the art of communicating knowledge, but be capable of moulding the mind of youth, and of giving the power which education confers a useful direction. These are the qualities for which patrons of schools on making choice of teachers, should anxiously look. They are those which the commissioners are anxious to find, to encourage, and to reward. The commissioners have provided a normal establishment adjoining their official house in Marlborough-street, Dublin, for training teachers and educating persons destined to undertake the charge of schools; and they will not, in future, sanction the appointment of a teacher permanently to any school, unless he shall have received a certificate from them, or from such one of their officers as they may authorise to examine him on the spot, that he is duly qualified for it. Persons presented for admission to the normal establishment must produce a certificate of good character from an officiating clergyman of the communion to which they belong; they must take the oath, or make a solemn declaration of allegiance before a magistrate and in the presence of the commissioners; they must pass through an examination in grammar, in the third, fourth, and fifth lesson books published by the commissioners, and which contain a series of historical, scientific, and general information; also in arithmetic, in geometry, and in mensuration. Those allowed to enter will be boarded and lodged at a house which the commissioners have taken at Glasnevin, in the immediate neighbourhood of Dublin, and to which an agricultural department is attached. They will receive religious instruction from their respective pastors. They will attend upon five days in the week at the training and model schools of the commissioners in Marlborough-street, whose lectures are delivered on different branches of knowledge, and where they will be practised in the art of teaching. They will receive instruction at home, particularly in agriculture, upon each evening, and they will attend on Saturdays at a farm which is conducted under the directions of the commissioners, and where they will see theory reduced to practice. They will undergo a final examination at the close of their course, and each will then receive a certificate according to his deserts."

His hon. Friend had also alluded to the assistance given to schools connected with monasteries and places of religious worship. He regretted that this course should have been ever found inevitable by the commissioners, but there had been no alteration in the original instructions of the noble Lord (Lord Stanley) in this respect. Let the commissioners, however, speak for themselves:—

"Although the commissioners do not absolutely refuse aid towards the erection of school houses on ground connected with a place of worship, they say, yet they much prefer having them erected on ground which is not so connected, where it can be obtained; they, therefore, expect that, before church, chapel, or meeting-house ground be adopted as the site of a school-house, inquiry be made whether another convenient site can be obtained, and that the result shall be stated to them."

With regard to the removal of the secretary of the board, the facts were simply these:—That gentleman had long intimated his wish to commute his employment for one in which he might exercise his profession—the law, and the Government convinced of his fitness, and pleased with the industry and integrity which he had exhibited in his situation of secretary, thought fit, when a vacancy occurred, to offer him an appointment of the sort which he had expressed a desire to have. The hon. Gentleman had also called for an explanation of the changes that had taken place in the constitution of the board. It was true, that the retirement of some original members had occurred, and that some gentlemen had been added to the board. If any differences had existed among the members of the board, he believed they had proceeded from misconception. At all events, they had not been laid before Government, and he believed there did not exist in any quarter a wish to prefer complaints, or to impugn the principles on which the system was conducted. He admitted, that this system might in some sense still be called an experiment as far as united education was concerned. It was not wholly decided yet, and if the success of the experiment could not at present be pronounced universal or complete, still he did in his conscience believe, that the system was advancing, wherever fair play was given to it, and room to develop itself, and would still more after alterations were made which the commissioners were disposed to engraft on the original plan, such as the improvement of the condition of the masters and the establishment of a more thorough system of inspection. He would be ready on a more fitting occasion to meet the opponents of the system upon its general merits. Sorry, indeed, should he be to incur any responsibility by interfering with its operation or checking its progress. He considered, that it would be beneficial to Ireland, and therefore, as long as he continued connected with Irish affairs it would receive his heartiest encouragement and support, believing as he did, that there was no question in which the general welfare and the progressive improvement of Ireland were more deeply involved. The noble Lord concluded by assenting to the motion, with the exception of that portion of the returns which related to the differences of religious belief in the children at the schools.

Mr. *Shaw* would be prepared to meet the noble Lord whenever he came forward as the champion of the existing system of national education in Ireland. He maintained that as a system of united education it had failed to afford satisfaction to any one religious class in Ireland. The noble Lord congratulated himself that if the system had failed as one of united education, it would resolve itself into one of separate education. He (Mr. Shaw) could not desire the obtaining of a separate education by such means. The noble Lord had agreed generally to the returns, but had refused the most important part of them. He denied that these were not the data for the formation of such a return, and surely it was very desirable if it could be done without any invidious views, to know whether the system had worked well as one of united education.

Mr. *Colquhoun* said that the Government possessed sufficient data to enable them to furnish the information sought, and he wished, in addition, to ascertain whether it was not a fact that in the greater part of the schools, Roman Catholic books of devotion were read during the hours appointed for literary instruction. He agreed with the hon. Member for Wicklow that there had been great unfairness in the amounts of grants made to these different schools. The grants made to schools in the provinces of Ulster and Leinster were large, and to those in the provinces of Munster and Connaught, where the people were the most uneducated, comparatively trifling. The grants were also very unequally distributed to different schools in the same provinces. He did not impute this extraordinary difference to partiality on the part of the commissioners; but he thought that it was sufficient to call upon Parliament to inquire what was the reason which induced them to make grants most sparingly in those parts of Ireland which required them the most, and most lavishly in those parts which appeared to require them the least. He concurred with the noble Lord in the extreme importance of having good masters for these schools, and had heard him with the greatest satisfaction, declare he should most heartily co-operate with the board in procuring good masters. But let the House see the wonderful difference which sometimes existed between profession and practice. The masters of these schools were not good; they were of that class of men which had been denounced by Mr. Grant, now Lord Glenelg, and were most of them better qualified for any other functions than those which they discharged. For instance, one of them in Sligo had been a smuggler; another near Limerick had been out in the rebellion of 1798, and still passed his evenings in the amiable pastime of reading to the peasantry the wretched garbage of the most Radical part of the press of Dublin; a third, in Achill, had been dismissed from the coast-guard for treasonable practices; and a fourth, in Waterford, had been sentenced to seven years' transportation, though his punishment had been subsequently commuted to nine months' imprisonment by Lord Normanby, for ringing the bell of the chapel at which he was clerk, to summon his neighbourhood to the commission of a most glaring outrage. In one of the female schools near Limerick, the mistress, who was to inculcate morality and temperance to the female pupils, was taken before the magistrates and fined for drunkenness. The worst case, however, which had fallen under his notice was that of a man of the name of White, who had been appointed to a school in the Queen's County. Complaints were made against this man as a tippler, whose conduct was demoralizing the minds of the children committed to his charge by the agent of the Marquess of Lansdowne, who was also agent of the hon. Member for Queen's County. The board wrote to the priest of the parish on the subject of these complaints, and he utterly denied the truth of them. The same complaints were again presented to the board, and then the board sent down an inspector to inquire into them, and he reported that nothing could be worse than the state of White's school. Was he removed thereupon? No. Again a similar representation was sent up to the board, and again it was referred to the priest. The priest declared that White had been maligned, and refused to remove him. The board then determined to call him up to Dublin to see whether he could be moulded under their care into something better; but shortly afterwards the master of the model-school reported that the man was incompetent, that he could make nothing of him, and that he had no hopes of reforming him. And yet, in a short time after all this, it was wrung by a committee of the House of Lords from the secretary to the board that this man White was still in possession of his school. He contended that the national system had failed, because the board had failed to perform its duty, and because, in obedience to the mandates of the priests, it had left every agitator, and every leader of Ribandism, in the possession of the school to which he had been appointed. He likewise insisted that the character of the inspectors, who cost the country 5,000*l.* a-year, was quite as bad as that of the schoolmasters. One of them (Dr. Finn) had taken the chair at a public meeting in favour of the repeal of the union in 1830 and again in 1833 at a public meeting held to denounce the Coercion Bill. The appointment of such a man might be satisfactory to the hon. and learned Member for Dublin; but to every good and honest man who valued the institutions of his country it was an appointment which must excite grief not unmixed with indignation and alarm.

Viscount *Morpeth.* The hon. Member ought in common fairness to state that Dr. Finn has been discharged.

Mr. *Colquhoun* was not in the secrets of the Irish Government, and therefore could not be aware either when or how long Dr. Finn had been discharged.

Viscount *Morpeth.* He has been discharged two years.

Mr. *Colquhoun* was not aware of that. He only knew, that when Dr. Finn was examined before the committee in 1837, he was then an inspector. But what must be the character of a board which could appoint a man so scandalized and so notorious as Dr. Finn to the responsible situation of an inspector? And now the noble Lord attempted to ride off from this charge by stating that Dr. Finn had been discharged! What he (Mr. Colquhoun) wanted to know was this—why Dr. Finn had ever been appointed? Was it wise to intrust large funds to the disposal of a board which acted with such inattention to its duties, or with such connivance with persons whom he needed not designate further, as to place in the possession and superintendence of these schools, men stained with such misconduct as he had described? He thought that the hon. Member for Wicklow had only done his duty in bringing before Parliament this misconduct on the part of the board. Parliament should be careful how it granted so large a sum of money as 50,000*l.* to be expended in schools of this description; and, above all, the people of England should be careful that there was not introduced amongst them a system of education which was at once a delusion and a scourge upon those whom it affected.

Mr. *Vernon Smith* would ask the hon. Member who had just sat down whether the facts which he had just stated had occurred before or after the investigation which a committee of the House of Commons had made into this subject in 1837. If they had occurred before, why had not the hon. Member stated them in the evidence which he then gave with so much prolixity? If they had occurred since, why had he not submitted them to the board, and waited until the board refused to inquire into them, before he submitted them to the consideration o.

Parliament? It was not possible for him or for any Member of the Government to disprove such charges against the board on a sudden and without a moment's notice. If the hon. Member thought his charges substantially correct, why had he not moved for the renewal of the committee which had formerly sat upon such charges? The result of the investigation instituted by that committee was this, that there had not been made out against the board any case so grave as to require any member of the committee to bring it formally under the notice of the House. For his own part, he had gone into that committee free from prejudice on either side, or if he had any prejudice it was in favour of a system which having been originally proposed by Lord Stanley, and subsequently adopted by Lord Morpeth, could not, he imagined, be in any respect detrimental to the interests of the Established Church in Ireland. In that committee he had arrived at the conclusion, that the national system was not a complete system of education, and that one of the reasons which prevented it from becoming so was the opposition given to it by the clergymen of the Establishment. The hon. Member had complained of the inequality of the grants made to different schools in different parts of Ireland. Assuming, for the sake of argument, that the hon. Member's statements were correct, that inequality would be found in all probability to arise from the want of local funds, which, according to the regulations of Lord Stanley, must be collected before any grant in aid could be given. From the evidence given before the committee of 1837, the impression on his mind was, that the masters of these schools had been fairly appointed. The hon. Gentleman opposite ought to have represented those cases in which he considered improper appointments had been made to the board itself, which had the best means of forming a judgment upon them. He recommended hon. Members to consult the opinion of the rev. Baptist Noel, a most exemplary clergyman and zealous Protestant, in his work upon Ireland. That rev. Gentleman avowed himself a supporter of the system, on the ground that, though imperfect, it had produced great benefit: he stated the question to be, whether it was better for the interests of the Protestant faith, that the Roman Catholics should be left in a state of utter darkness and ignorance, or that they should receive an education superior to any they had hitherto had.

Lord *Teignmouth* thought, with great deference to the noble Lords, the Member for North Lancashire, and the Secretary for Ireland, that the system of education in that country favoured by them had proved an utter failure, not only because it had not produced union between the Protestants and the Roman Catholics, but because it had gradually become exclusively Popish in its objects. The noble Lord, the Member for North Lancashire, had introduced Scriptural extracts, which were supposed to confer religious instruction, but by the fourth report of the Board of Education it appeared, that those had ceased to be used, and that the education provided had become exclusively secular in its character, although both parties had protested against this course. It was well known, that the Protestant and the Roman Catholic Children were no longer united in the same school. It appeared from the statement of Mr. Carlyle, before the committee of the House of Commons, that in 300 out of 444 schools in Leinster, Munster, and Connaught, there were no Protestants; and in 125 more not above nine. Dr. Elrington had stated before the same committee, that the system of Scriptural education, which had been discountenanced, in order to substitute for it a system unscriptural and anti-Protestant, had been in such a flourishing condition, that the number of scholars increased by 300,000 from 1812 to 1824. He was persuaded, indeed, that nothing could check the spread of scriptural education in Ireland, let the Pope issue whatever bulls he pleased. He could not deny, that the present system had done good; but, being founded on principles essentially vicious, must, in the end, lead to the most mischievous results.

Sir *F. French* thought this was part of the crusade which had been undertaken by her Majesty's Government against the Protestant religion in Ireland.

Mr. *Plumptre* said, the reason why the Protestant clergy would not co-operate with the Roman Catholic priests in the conduct of these schools was, that they thought the system was deficient in principle. For his part, he hoped the Protestant clergy never would so co-operate, and he firmly believed, that the present system, as a joint system, never ought never could, and never would, flourish in Ireland.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* said discussions of this kind were very provoking, as they led to no definite result. He believed, that the present system presented the nearest approach that was possible in the existing circumstances to a legitimate and just application of the principle of education in Ireland. He contended for that application, not as being the best system of education, but as the best that circumstances rendered possible in Ireland. But he was firmly of opinion, that the circumstances which rendered such a system applicable to Ireland could not be urged to render it applicable to England, where the circumstances did not exist. On the contrary, he thought, that the very circumstances which rendered the system applicable in the case of Ireland rendered it inapplicable in England. He, as a Protestant, did not believe, that the system would tend to the increase of the Roman Catholic religion. On the other hand, he did not support these schools with the purpose of making them schools of proselytism. With respect to the question of the exclusion of Scriptural knowledge from the schools, he would mention a case that was within his own observation. He had some time back visited some of these schools, and, in particular, one in a remote part of the country, where, by reason of the unfortunate withdrawal of the Protestants of the neighbourhood from all kinds of control over the establishment, its sole and exclusive direction and superintendence was vested in the Roman Catholic priest. He went unexpectedly and without notice; he asked for the rules of the school, and requested, that the children should go through the usual work, which they would have done, at that hour of the day, if no stranger had been present. The appointed business was the Scripture extracts, and these children, under the guidance of a Roman Catholic priest, went through their exercise and answered the questions which he was permitted to put to them, in the most unexceptionable way, and so as to show their full acquaintance with the subject. He said, therefore, that it was not fair to bring accusations of want of knowledge of the Scriptures against these schools. It might be that a sectarian character attached to the schools, as was so often objected from the other side, but whence did that arise? Because the Protestants, for one reason or another, most unfortunately withdrew from all control and direction of them. This he much regretted.

Mr. *O'Conor* said, that while hon. Gentlemen opposite seemed ready on all occasions to make attacks on the Roman Catholic priesthood, he was, on the other hand, ready to pay his tribute of respect to the memory of an eminent divine of the established faith—he meant Dr. Law, late Bishop of Elphin, whose principal object was to render all his diocesans good Christians by dispersing books, and he would say to the hon. Gentlemen opposite, in the language of charity, "Go ye and do likewise."

Mr. *Somerset Maxwell* did not mean to be uncharitable, but he must say, that this system operated as an invasion of the word of God.

Mr. *Pringle* wished to ask the noble Secretary for Ireland whether he meant to persist in withholding that portion of the returns that would distinguish the numbers of Protestant and Roman Catholic children. If the noble Lord did refuse this, he hoped the hon. Member for Wicklow would persist in taking the sense of the House on the question.

Mr. *J. Grattan* wanted to take the direction of religious education from the hands of a majority either of Protestants or Catholics. His object was to do away with distinctions. He moved for the return for the purpose of seeing how the principle worked; 50,000*l.* a year was a great deal for those schools, and was quite enough for a sufficient education. But the masters of those schools were most inefficient and almost contemptible. He would ask the noble Lord to look to Holland and to Prussia—in those countries they found that every thing depended on the master, and that without efficient well paid masters, they could not have efficient schools. As to the religious differences in Ireland, if it were found impossible to carry into effect a combined system of education, it would be better to let the grant be divided between the two parties. For his own part, nothing could be more foreign from his intention, than to revive or excite in the slightest degree the differences and animosities of Protestant and Catholic.

Viscount *Morpeth* said, that his complaint against his hon. Friend, the Member for Wicklow (Mr. Grattan), was not that he said any thing calculated to excite difference between Catholic and Protestant in his speech, but that he had put it in his motion, and in the returns which he called for. He felt some hesitation in acceding to the motion for these returns, chiefly from a feeling that granting them might seem to militate against the principle on which the system was founded, and on which it was supposed to be carried on. However, his hon. Friend had stated, with some truth, that the whole point at issue did, in some degree, turn on the precise particulars to which the motion referred, and he felt the ground cut from under him by the partial return made by one of the Commissioners. He felt, therefore, that he could not with a good grace, resist the motion of his hon. Friend. He wished to remedy an omission in what he had formerly stated. His hon. Friend, among other charges, had alluded to the discontinuance of Dr. M'Arthur's services at the head of the model school. He was sure, that his hon. Friend did not know the melancholy circumstances which had given occasion to that removal, or he would not have alluded to it. Dr. M'Arthur had been superintendent of the model school, and he must say, that an individual more fit for his situation it had never been his fortune to come across. The reason of his removal was not that any change in the system was proposed to be carried into effect; but he regretted to say, in consequence of his over-zealous exertions in the discharge of his duty, Mr. M'Arthur had been visited with the most melancholy bereavement with which Providence could afflict a human being—he meant the bereavement of his reason.

Motion agreed to.

THE MEXICAN BLOCKADE.] Viscount *Sandon*, in consequence of the notice he had given, respecting the French blockade of the Mexican ports, presented a petition from the merchants of Liverpool on that subject. It was a subject which had previously been before the House. He thought, he perhaps need not further allude to the contents, as he should be called upon to move for them in some detail. He would only remark, that this petition was not one signed only by the merchants of Liverpool, but was signed by other persons also. (Other similar petitions having been presented, the noble Lord proceeded.) The motion of which he had given notice was for the production of certain papers between certain merchants in connexion with the trade of Mexico and Buenos Ayres and the members of her Majesty's Government, whether abroad, or in the department of the Foreign Office. He felt much embarrassment in putting himself forward on the present occasion, considering the amount of interest involved in the question, and the greater amount of interest connected with the subject, one co-extensive with the most vital interests of British commerce. He should not have thought of mixing a question of this nature up with a question of the law of nations, a question for which he was not fitted by peculiar education, if he had not been called on most imperatively, some way or other, to bring the question before the House. In bringing forward this question, he confessed he felt one difficulty very forcibly—that the nature of the discussion almost imposed on him the necessity of entering in some degree on a sort of criticism on the actions and proceedings of a friendly nation; and, therefore, he should take the liberty of disclaiming at the very outset of his observations any feeling of hostility against a country upon the conduct of which he was called on to make some remarks, in any other way than that their proceedings were at variance with the interests of Great Britain, and against the interest of all other nations with which Mexico had any extensive commerce. Perhaps it was necessary, before he went into the case, in some degree to allude to the proceedings, both with regard to Buenos Ayres and Mexico, which had preceded the blockade, the effect of which all who were engaged in British commerce had such reason to deplore. At the same time it was not the business of that House to enter into the policy of a foreign country, except as it regarded the interests of this. He should endeavour, therefore, to make his observations as concise as possible. With regard to Buenos Ayres, for a long period of time France had shown a great desire to possess considerable influence in the river Plata. They had evidence of this early desire of France, not only in the state papers published by the Foreign Office in 1820 and 1821, but also in the communications and investigations on this subject with M. Chateaubriand. In the year 1821, under the administration of that prime minister of France, the government of France entered into negotiations for the purpose of establishing a Bourbon dynasty as the government of that devoted colony. As soon as this was discovered, Mr. Canning, the then Minister of England, made a most decided communication to France, inquiring if such was the intention of France. If he (Lord Sandon) was not misinformed, to that question M. Chateaubriand gave a denial; but subsequently the vanity of that distinguished man had led him to betray the fact that his denial was not founded on fact, and that his intrigues in France had that object. But he confessed that this early proceeding gave them a little insight into the motives of the transactions which France had been carrying on lately in Buenos Ayres, and led them to imagine that it was not simply for the redress of her grievances by that republic, but for the purpose of carrying on her ancient interests in that state, and for which she had taken the very extraordinary and unusual measure she had. It was a remarkable fact that France had throughout interfered in the internal divisions of that state. She had protected the Minister of that state, who had been driven by an act of his Government to seek refuge in France. He remained there a considerable time with other refugees, and with them had now returned to Buenos Ayres under the protection of the French flag. The ostensible causes, however, of the differences between Buenos Ayres and France, were, so far as he could collect them, amidst the liberal profusion of phraseology displayed in all the diplomatic correspondence on this question on both sides, out of which it was very difficult to obtain any information, so far as he had been able to detect, the avowed objects of France were the protection of some of her subjects who had settled within the district of Buenos Ayres from being called on to serve in the militia, that they should have the right of retail trade, and they also sought for indemnity for some injuries which particular individuals of that nation had suffered, or at least had been stated to have suffered; but greatly predominating over all these was the imposition on the state of Buenos Ayres of a treaty of commerce similar to that enjoyed by Great Britain. He thought, though the exemption from serving in the militia might be a cause for negotiation, and an object desirable for France to attain for her subjects, it yet did not furnish a just cause of war. With regard to the individual cases alluded to, he confessed they appeared to him exceedingly trifling, and not such as warranted the proceedings which had been taken. One man had entered into the service of the state of Buenos Ayres, had betrayed his trust, and was thrown into prison; he conceived that the Government had no longer any right to interfere in that case. Another case was that of a Frenchman, who was a suttler to the Buenos Ayres army, and who was convicted of robbing the mess, and he also had been imprisoned for his misconduct. He conceived that in this case the French government had no right to interfere. There were two or three cases of this kind, one for the removal of a glue manufactory, which was a public nuisance. Cases of this kind might justify the interference of the French government, but were utterly inadequate to justify the exhibition of national resentment. He believed, also, that no nation had a right to impose on another country a treaty of commerce, and make the refusal of it a cause of war. After a good deal of negotiation backward and forward, the French Admiral who was charged with the negotiation being apparently on the point of coming to terms, some discontented chiefs of Buenos Ayres or Monte Video had interposed and broken off the amicable negotiation, and measures of a hostile tendency were then entered into. A remarkable circumstance connected with this transaction was, that France, not content with the simple question of blockade, had condescended to associate her flag with the flag of individuals actually in rebellion to the Government, and in concert with those rebels had at one moment overturned the regular government at Monte Video, with which she was at peace. In concert with another rebel individual, they had seized the island of Martin Garcia, in the river Plata, and the flag of France was now flying in that place. The government of France had put itself in the singular position of uniting with rebels to a government with which, at the same moment they were in treaty. To this island of Martin Garcia France had sent down troops, and was fortifying it, and from its position it gave her the command of the river Plata, and control over the whole commerce of the river. She was sending out workmen also to erect fortifications there. Several vessels were sent out by France with workmen and officers to occupy this island. These facts justified him in the statement made at the outset, that the movements made in South America were not for the purposes avowed by the French government, but were a continuation of that plan acted upon, though disavowed by it, in 1821, to get possession of some portion of the South American states. The disputes of France with Mexico were much of the same nature as those with Buenos Ayres, though he confessed that the French had more reason to complain of the conduct of Mexico than of Buenos Ayres. He did not deny that France, as well as other nations which had to deal with Mexico, had much reason to be dissatisfied with her conduct, and he had had on more than one occasion to complain on the part of his constituents of the injustice of the Mexican government. It had levied forced loans without distinction of the subjects of other nations who were affected by it; but this they justified on the plea of necessity; in fact, like other half-civilized, half-organized states, Mexico was not in a condition to afford adequate protection to the subjects of other nations, but he must say, that that did not justify France in proceeding to the extremities she did. He did not feel it necessary on this occasion to enter into an examination in detail of the grounds stated by France for her blockade of the coasts of Mexico, but it could not be denied, that the French government, whatever might have been the real ground of dispute, had made an attempt to extort commercial advantages under the pretext of redressing individual grievances. After a good deal of negotiation on this subject, a blockade of the Mexican ports was notified by France in May last, and made, in his opinion, with a force not sufficient to justify her Majesty's Government in acknowledging it at first, but he admitted, that afterwards a force sufficient for an effective blockade had been sent out under Admiral Baudin. The question which he raised on this part of the case was, whether, in the first instance, Great Britain was called upon to recognize the blockade with such breathless haste as it had done; and next whether, considering the great amount of British interests at stake, the French had any just ground for a blockade, and whether it was at first enforced by a force sufficiently effective. He confessed, for his own part, that he much doubted whether the French were justified in the blockade at all. He was but little skilled in those questions which arose out of international law, but he had the curiosity to look into several writers of admitted authority on these subjects, and, notwithstanding the practice which had grown up of recent date of resorting to blockade on slight occasions, and before a declaration of war, he found in those authorities a decided opinion, that a blockade was a purely belligerent right. It had, however, been of late used in a different sense. He could not in the authorities to which he had referred, find any case in which it had been recognized in any other sense. It seemed not to have been a case at all contemplated. It was like parricide under the Romans —no punishment had been decreed against it, because it was a case not at all contemplated. Looking at the decisions of Sir William Scott, he found that blockade had always been held as a pure right of war between belligerent parties; that it was looked upon as an extreme right of war, as it inflicted so much injury, not alone on the nation whose ports were declared in a state of blockade, but also on the interests of neutral powers, and on those grounds Sir W. Scott would not recognize it in any other sense. He (Lord Sandon) looked upon blockade as something analogous to a state of siege, which no power had a right to enter upon except in a state of war. This was the opinion of Bynkershoek, that it was purely a belligerent right of parties at declared war. All authoritative writers on the law of nations admitted, that a blockade to be recognized must be effective not only for one but for all of the ports declared to be blockaded, that it should be as far as possible a circumvallation of those ports, if he might so use that word, so as to make it a matter of great risk for any vessel to attempt to go in or come out of those ports. This was the opinion of very high naval authorities. It was held by the British Admiral Rowley, who was at the head of a naval force in those very waters in 1821 and 1822. At that period a blockade had been proclaimed by the Spanish government of the ports in the Rio de la Plata, by which British commerce in those quarters had suffered very considerably. On that occasion the British Admiral addressed a remonstrance to the Spanish officer in command of the blockading force, in which he declared, that he would resist the blockade, against the legality of which he protested; that legality, he observed, depending on the power of the blockading force, to prevent any vessel from going in or coming out of the blockaded ports without great risk. Now, he wanted to know, whether a similar course had been adopted with respect to the blockade of the ports of Mexico?—whether the blockade was effective as to all the ports, for if it was not effective in some, it would vitiate the whole? The Admiral went on to say, that the blockading ships could not enforce it partially, and only where these ships happened to be, for the blockade must be effectively kept in all. The language of Sir W. Scott on the same subject was, that the besieging force must be applied to all the ports. Now, he much doubted, whether the French blockading force could extend to all the ports of Mexico, particularly the northern. The language used by the French Admiral in 1826, on the same subject, was similar to that held by Admiral Rowley,—nay, it went beyond it, for the French Admiral held, that the blockade ceased to be effective even if the blockading force should be driven off by stress of weather. That, however, was an extreme for which he (Lord Sandon) did not contend. An American commodore held similar language in the case of a declared blockade by a Brazilian force, which the American would not recognize, unless there had been a previous declaration of war. Having said thus much as to the right of blockade, he would now come to the course pursued by her Majesty's Government with respect to the complaints of British merchants. Soon after the knowledge of the blockade reached this country, great anxiety was naturally manifested by merchants connected with the Mexican trade, and he (Lord Sandon) had had several communications with his noble Friend the Secretary for Foreign Affairs on the subject. He would not allude to those of a private nature, but would confine himself to public official communications, and he thought, that from these he should be able to show, that so far from the Government having shown any disposition to oppose the conduct of the French, it had throughout supported it, and from the beginning had given the cold shoulder to the complaints of the British merchants, and that this indifference to those complaints had extended from the Foreign office to the Admiralty. France he would admit, might have had some ground for the course which she took, but considering the great interests at stake, and the necessity of preventing the shedding of human blood, the British Government was bound at once to have demanded from France a full statement of the grounds of the blockade and to have mitigated, if it could not wholly prevent, the injuries which that blockade was calculated to inflict on our commerce. What, however, had occurred? The first communication to Government on the subject was the remonstrance from the merchants of Liverpool. They claimed that protection to which British vessels were entitled, and they added, that a short time before the date of their memorial (in June) there was not a British ship of war off any of the ports of Mexico, that several vessels richly laden which had sailed from our shores in March had been warned off the coast, and that the Americans, taking advantage of their proximity, were reaping the benefits of our exclusion by supplying Mexico with articles which they used to get from us, and that this supply was carried on by a contraband trade with the smaller Mexican ports. Well, it might be expected that his noble Friend, the Secretary for Foreign Affairs, would at least have assured the merchants that he would do all in his power to protect British commerce with Mexico, which from Liverpool alone was worth half a million annually, but they had not received even that small consolation. They received an answer acknowledging the receipt of their memorial, and stating, that the French government, in blockading the ports of Mexico, had not exceeded any of those maritime, or international laws, which Great Britain had so often acted upon in her blockades, and that, therefore, there was no ground of complaint on the part of the merchants, or any right of interference with France by this Government. His noble Friend (Lord Palmerston) had stated that he would uphold the strict enforcement of the law of blockade on which he had acted. Would that we had now Mr. Canning at the head of our foreign affairs; he could easily imagine the indignant remonstrance which he would have sent against the late aggression on our commerce. Instead of that, the merchants who remonstrated, got the cold reception he had mentioned, and were told that they had no right to complain, and that her Majesty's Government had no right to interfere. Another application made by the merchants of London had been met by an answer of a similar kind; the conduct of France was defended, and the same unwillingness as before was manifested to take any step in favour of British commerce. In the month of August an application had been made to the Admiralty by parties connected with the Mexican trade, and the assistance of a packet was sought to bring specie from Mexico, a right or privilege which had been granted to American merchants. What had been the reception given to that application? Was any desire evinced to mitigate the injuries suffered in consequence of the blockade? The applicants were told by the Secretary to the Admiralty, that, having laid their letter desiring further protection for British commerce to Mexico, before their Lordships, they had directed him to state they did not see any ground for interfering with the French blockade. If that were so, then why had a British force been sent there since? If there had been no necessity for sending out a force then, what necessity existed for our keeping up a force there now? A remarkable fact was, that British packets and ships of war had formerly enjoyed the privilege of carrying out specie in spite of a blockade, but even this privilege had been withdrawn in the present instance. His friends, however, not satisfied with the answers they had received from the Government, had again pressed the subject upon the Ministers, and complained of the privilege to which he had just alluded being enjoyed by the American ships, although the British vessels were deprived of it. But slow were the Government in answering these complaints, and when they did so, they appeared to take the part of the French, instead of evincing a desire to protect the British interests, There was also another instance of the conduct of the Government. The merchants in Liverpool and London were not satisfied with the assurances they had received from the Government that this blockade was effectual, and quoted several instances to the contrary, and mentioned the port of Tampico having been then thirty or forty days without any vessel. To this they received for answer that the blockade was not to be considered ineffectual because, by stress of wind and weather, vessels had been prevented from occupying certain ports. But surely it was not the part of Government thus to excuse the inefficiency of the blockade. On the contrary, they ought to have taken the course which had been followed on former occasions by Admiral Rowley, Captain Heywood, and Admiral De Courcy, by insisting on the blockade being rendered effectual where it was enforced at all, and not in seeking to make our situation worse, by preventing opportunities of introducing British commerce. There was also another point relative to the port of Laguna. It appeared, that at that place there was not one single ship until the 30th of May, although it was the only port for the important article of logwood. Now last year he had presented a petition from his own constituents, signed by persons of all parties, complaining in general terms of the want of protection which the Government had extended to that branch of commerce, and in his opinion, they were justified in their complaint. In June last it was known in this country that an expedition had been sent out from France, to interfere with Mexico, and yet it was not until the 28th of October that any instructions or vessels were sent out, or that Mr. Pakenham the chargé d'affaires had sailed, so that nearly five months had elapsed after the Ministers were cognisant of the facts before any proceedings were taken. Some communication certainly appeared to have taken place between our Government and France in the month of August, the nature of which was not stated, but he was satisfied that the language of her Majesty's Ministers to the French government was not very decided or likely to be very effective. He thought he had a right to say, that where great commercial interests were at stake and foreigners were looked upon with a jealous eye, where fears were entertained of foreign force and bombardment was not unlikely to follow, it was the business of the Government to anticipate consequences, and not to ask the House for an acquittal of allowing British interests to be assailed. At the blockade of Vera Cruz, when the British fled from the town, and left their property unprotected, he thought it was a serious injury to their character and standing, and to the importance and dignity of the merchants of this country. The Buenos Ayres trade, also, was too important for the Government to overlook. He had specific amounts of the exports to that State, from Liverpool alone, during the years 1836 and 1837, and it appeared that they amounted in each year to about £.500,000, and on an average employed eighty vessels in that trade. The House, however, knew, that for the last three-quarters of a year there had been interruptions to trading with that country, and he would not, therefore, go more into details. With reference to the conduct of the French towards Mexico, it seemed to him that there was on their part a determination to make a permanent settlement in that country, and an inclination not merely to protect their subjects, but to pursue objects for their own aggrandizement. He had not entirely forgotten the affront which had been offered to an officer at Algiers, having led to the establishment of the French power there, and, subsequently, to the extension of the Algerine territories under the dominion of France. In Brazilian Guiana, also, they had made use of petty disputes in order to get a permanent possession of that country. He thought, therefore, that we had a right to look with suspicion on the proceedings of France towards Mexico, and that the British Minister ought not to have taken the part of that Government instead of advocating British interests. He had trespassed on the House at great length, but he was trusted with the representation of a great commercial constituency, and he must therefore call on the House to give this subject a full discussion, that it might be known what was the course the Government had taken, and how little protection had been afforded to the British merchants. If the Government had interposed, as they ought, and in firm language had remonstrated with France on the disproportion of the object they had announced that they were following, with the means that they employed in order to effect it—if Ministers had represented the injuries the French were inflicting on Mexico and on us, and had said, that they were willing to interpose with Mexico on the subjects of complaint—if they had really sent a British force within the contested waters of the river La Plata, or the Gulf of Mexico —not indeed with any hostile views, but only to protect the British interests in case of any collision with a foreign Power, then was he convinced, that France would not have pushed us to the extent she had —she would not for a whole year have interrupted our great interests in the mines of Mexico, amounting to about £.12,000,000 of specie annually remitted to this country, and, above all, that the honour of the British flag would not have been exposed to the insult it had recently received. He therefore felt himself entitled to call on her Majesty's Government "for copies of any memorials addressed to her Majesty's Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs by British merchants trading with Mexico and Buenos Ayres, praying his interference to protect British commerce against the effect of blockades established in the ports of those countries by the Government of France; together with the correspondence with the said merchants arising thereout." He should also like to know the amount of British force present in the bay of Vera Cruz at the time of the taking of the Castle of San Juan d'Ulloa by the French squadron under Admiral Baudin, and at the taking of Vera Cruz by the same squadron. He also desired to know what was the tone of the noble Secretary's remonstrance with the French Government, and whether he took in his negotiations with that Government the same British tone which he had exhibited in that House on the same subject. The noble Viscount concluded by moving an humble Address for the papers just mentioned.

Viscount *Palmerston*, in rising to reply to the speech which had just been addressed to the House, felt bound to do the noble Lord opposite the justice to say, that he had brought forward the question in a manner as little calculated as possible to cause embarrassment to the great interests involved. With regard to the greater part of the documents, he offered no objection to their production. But he considered, it would not be consistent with the interests of the public service to produce copies of the communications pending between the English and French Governments on the subject alluded to by the noble Lord. In the principle laid down by the noble Lord, that the act of blockade was the act of a belligerent party, he was prepared to concur, and equally agreed with the noble Lord in thinking, that to be respected it ought to be effective; but he differed from the noble Lord with respect to the application of his principle. In reference to the blockades mentioned by the noble Lord, the Government had not acted on its own unadvised responsibility, but had consulted the law advisers of the Crown, and by their opinion the Government had been guided. The noble Lord appeared to think, that the Government, by notifying to British merchants the state of blockade of the ports of South America, had sanctioned that blockade; whereas the only object and only effect of that notification was to warn our merchants of the danger which might possibly arise from any attempt on their part to break the blockade. Such was the case with regard to the blockade of Tampico; and he conceived, that the Government had only performed its duty in cautioning British merchants against the possibility of risk, which they might have incurred, in sending their ships from this country to South America, in ignorance of the existence of a blockade. But if, on the contrary, Ministers had adopted the course advised by the noble Lord—if they had said to British merchants, "Go and enter the port with your ships;" they would not only have taken upon themselves, but would also have put upon the country, the responsibility of going to war with France in support of the claims of any British merchant whose ship might have been taken on entering the port of Tampico, when in a state of blockade. The position of France and Mexico, previous to the imposition of the blockade was such, that those two parties might virtually be considered in a state of war: because France having announced, that if certain demands made by her were not acceded to, the commander of her naval force would be authorised, by his instructions, to take certain steps in order to procure the redress which was sought, he conceived, when compliance with those demands was refused, war was the necessary consequence. Therefore, blockade was not a measure of coercion during peace, but must be looked upon as a step taken by a party in a state of war, and on that ground the blockade must be considered as legal and justifiable. With regard to the effectiveness of the blockade, he must observe, that from the commencement a sufficient force had been maintained by France for the blockade of the Mexican ports. It might be true, that during a certain period Tampico was not blockaded; but he put it again to the House, whether the Government would have been justified in advising British merchants to send their property to a place which most probably would be in a state of blockade when their property arrived there. In the outset, then, he entirely denied the charge brought against him personally and against the Government to which he had the honour to belong, of being indifferent to the commercial interests of the country, and that they identified themselves rather with the interests of other nations. He most unequivocally declared, that there never existed in this country an Administration which paid more attention to the commercial interests of the country than the present Government. Much as the Ministers thought it their duty to cultivate the friendly alliance of other nations, they still looked upon the interest of England as the interest which ought to be the polar star and guiding principle of their conduct; and he defied any man to point to any one act of his, while holding the office of Foreign Minister, which showed that he had any other principle or object in view than the interest of the country to which he belonged. He, therefore, repelled the taunt thrown against him, and which was unworthy of his noble Friend; and he was satisfied, that no person who knew any thing of his private feeling or public conduct could do otherwise than acquit him of such a charge. The noble Lord said, that France, even under the dominion of the elder branch of the Bourbons, had manifested a wish to establish, in 1821, the Duke of Lucca as sovereign of Buenos Ayres. Such a course of conduct, however, would appear to him more likely to proceed from a monarchical feeling on the part of France than from a desire to establish French influence in South America; because the Duke of Lucca was more connected with the family of Spain than with that of France. At the same time, it was not unnatural that France should have the same wish to extend her commercial relations as the noble Lord entertained to see the commerce of England extended. However, he did not stand there in the character which the noble Lord attempted to thrust upon him—namely, as acting the part of a Minister of France rather than of England, and, therefore, it was, that he thought the example set by the noble Lord, of impugning the course taken by one foreign nation with regard to another, ought to be followed with caution; because the party accused was not present to offer a defence of his conduct. If such a line of proceeding was generally pursued, it would be necessary to have treaties empowering the Ministers of one country to be present in the Legislature of another, in order to defend themselves when attacked; as the French Ministers were, for the same purpose, allowed to enter both the legislative chambers of France. He did not, however, intend to apply these general remarks to the course pursued on the present occasion by the noble Lord, because he had made all his remarks bear upon the general interests of this country. He, therefore, did not feel it incumbent on him to reply to the statement of the noble Lord, that in the disputes with Buenos Ayres and Mexico, France had, in the means she had adopted for enforcing her demands, exceeded her right. He quite agreed with the noble Lord, that it was not fitting for one country to attempt, by the force of arms, to compel another to conclude a treaty of commerce, which ought to be the result of spontaneous negotiations between independent powers,—and he was likewise prepared to say, that the performance of military service was a duty which an independent state might enforce on all sojourners within its territory, and that exemption from such service ought to be made matter of treaty. At the same time, he must say, that the English Government had had frequent occasion, and for a long time, to complain of grievous injustice committed by the Mexican Government on British subjects; and, therefore, it would be drawing too hasty a conclusion to infer that the Government of France might not, in consequence of the complaints of the subjects of that country meeting with no attention, have felt that it was justified in bringing such a state of things to a definite termination. The noble Lord imagined, that the object of France was to form a permanent establishment in the island of Martin Garcia; but he could assure the noble Lord, that her Majesty's present Government had obtained, with respect to that island, better assurances from France than the noble Lord's friends had received with respect to Algiers; for assurances of the most formal character had been given that France did not intend, and never had intended, to retain any portion of the territory of Buenos Ayres or Mexico. With respect to Buenos Ayres, the British Government had been, for a considerable time endeavouring, by negotiation, to bring about some accommodation between the two hostile powers; and that constituted an additional reason why he should not enter into any detailed discussion as to the merits of the case, as respected the two parties, between whom the English Government was endeavouring to bring about an accommodation. With respect to Mexico, he had, on a former occasion, stated how the matter stood. It was well known, that when the dispute first arose between France and Mexico, the English Government offered its mediation, which was declined, in the first instance, by the French Minister in Mexico. That mediation was, nevertheless, subsequently admitted, and our Chargé d'Affaires, Mr. Ashburnham, was instructed to effect an accommodation between the parties, which duty he discharged ably, zealously, and with considerable success. That gentleman, while affording protection to the subjects of England, had exerted himself to prevent acts of violence being committed on the persons and property of French subjects in Mexico, for which he had received the thanks of the French commander. The whole effect of the noble Lord's argument seemed to be, that the British Government ought not to have permitted the blockade of Mexico; or, having permitted it, that the British Government ought now to declare, that that blockade should cease. But did the noble Lord mean openly to assert, that there was any thing in the quarrel between Mexico and France that would justify or make it expedient for the British Government to go to war with France in order to compel her to recede from her demands? If such a course had been pursued, he feared that the noble Lord's constituents would have complained of a greater amount of inconvenience than they now experienced from the state of blockade. Was it to be maintained, that when two powers proceeded to hostilities, England should interfere, and because her commerce was thereby affected by a warfare, put down with a high hand the state of warfare? That might be a very proper doctrine for a country so all-powerful as England to hold, but the question was, would it be just to act upon the principle which it contained, and if it was acted upon, would not a weaker state have a right to say, that we were using unjustly a giant's power? Suppose this country had a just ground of complaint against another nation, and that it was deemed necessary to go to war, in order to enforce redress, what would they think if

France said, "Hold your hand, you must not go to war," and endeavoured, by force, to compel them to maintain peace? Such language and conduct on the part of France would be resented as insulting to England, and he was sure, that there was no Gentleman in that House who would not support the Government in resenting such language, and in throwing back on France the menace which that country had dared to use. With regard to the charge against the Government, of having no ships upon the station during the invasion of Mexico, he must say, that that charge was not well grounded, for the British ships had watched the progress of the blockade, and those ships, as had been shown on a former occasion by the Secretary of the Admiralty, had received orders from the Government, which had been fully carried into effect. In September they were informed, that a large French force was going out to Mexico, and that it was probable, that hostilities would be commenced against San Juan d'Ulloa, and the Government had, therefore, sent out a larger naval force—not to force the French to abandon hostilities, for that would have been to commence war between France and England, but in order to give a greater moral weight to the negotiations which were carrying on, and which the right hon. Baronet opposite seemed to treat with derision, although they had been treated very differently in another place. If that addition to our naval force had been sent out to protect San Juan d'Ulloa, he admitted that it had arrived too late. But that was not the object in view, and the force which was sent out was not too late for the purpose which the Government had in view, and he trusted the efforts which were making to effect an accommodation of the differences between France and Mexico would be attended with perfect success. He would not hesitate to assert, that the argument of the noble Lord, if it was good for any thing, went much further than the noble Lord had carried it. The noble Lord must either contend, that England ought not to have permitted the blockade, or he must allow, that France had a perfect right to establish that blockade, and that England was not at liberty to do any thing more than to endeavour by her good offices to establish peace between the belligerent parties. With regard to the question of blockade, he must say, that England was not the power which ought to question the practice of blockade. He had in his pocket a list of between forty and fifty blockades established by England during the last war. [*Hear.*] [Sir *R. Peel:* Yes, in a time of war.] Certainly, during the war; but the state between France and Mexico was a state of war; and did the right hon. Baronet think, that England had never established a blockade without a formal declaration of war? The cheer, therefore, of the right hon. Baronet, the Member for Tamworth, went for nothing. The French Government had a right to establish a blockade, and as long as there was a sufficient force to make that blockade effectual, any ship attempting to break through it must do so at its own proper risk. The noble Lord had complained of the mode in which he (Lord Palmerston) had received those persons who had presented memorials on the subject of the blockade. Now he could assure the noble Lord and the House that nothing was further from his intention than to treat with any thing like want of respect the parties who had applied to him, and whose interests were deeply involved in the question. He was well aware of the high respectability of those parties, and that they were, on personal considerations, entitled to be treated with frankness and candour; but with regard to very delicate transactions with foreign Powers, it certainly was not his duty to go into any explanations with those parties as to what the Government was doing, or what it intended to do. Had he done so his answers would, he well knew, have appeared next day in all the newspapers, and he, without meaning it, might thus, from the way in which those answers would have been reported and commented upon, have led other parties into embarrassment in their commercial transactions, and so committed the country as he had no right to commit it. He was sure, that the noble Lord and the parties who had applied to him would acquit him of intentional disrespect, and that those to whom answers had been sent would see that he, as a Minister of the Crown, ought not to have told them what the hopes, and fears, and views of the Government were with respect to the conduct of France towards Mexico. The noble Lord had brought another charge against the Government with respect to specie. The noble Lord said, that the Government neglected the interests of the British merchants, and that it was not till they were applied to by the English merchants, that the Government had sought from France a relaxation of the rules of the blockade as respected specie, although permission to import specie had been granted to the Americans. Now, when the French Government instituted the blockade, they were entitled to make it perfect and compulsory, but although such was their undoubted right, they had said that, out of respect for England, and in consideration of the Post-office regulations which had recently been agreed on between the two countries, they would except the Post-office packets of England, and, in regard to them, would not enforce the strict rules of the blockade. Of course, however, it was to be understood, that those packets were only to carry letters, and that they were not to take on board or to land any merchandise on which duty was levied by the Mexican Government, because, by so doing, they would have increased the revenues of that power, and given them additional means of carrying on hostilities against France. When, however, it was stated to the Government that an indulgence had been granted by France to the Americans with regard to specie, the Government of this country had applied to the French Government, and obtained a similar indulgence for the merchants of England. So far, therefore, was this transaction from being a proof of the imputation which had been cast upon the Government, of favouring other nations to the detriment of our own merchants, it showed, on the contrary, that the Government had paid immediate attention to the representations which had been made to them, and that they had obtained from France a greater degree of concession than had been extended to any other nation. He most positively denied, that there had been any want of attention on the part of the Government to the commercial interests of the country, and he would assert, that they had laboured assiduously to put an end to a contest between other powers which was injurious to the interests of England, and to effect an accommodation between France and Mexico. When the noble Lord said, that this war between France and Mexico explained the falling-off which he stated to have taken place in the revenue of England, he defied the noble Lord to prove that position, and on this point he would refer the noble Lord to the right hon. Baronet, the Member for Tamworth, who, by returns which he had brought forward on a late occasion, would prove to his satisfaction that in 1838, the year of the blockade, the commerce of England had greatly increased, and that, in truth, it had not been attended with any injurious effects on the revenues of this country.

Mr. *E. Tennent* wished to move an amendment for further papers illustrative of the nature of French proceedings. It was a startling fact, that France within the last twelve months, and during a period of profound peace, should have possessed herself, by blockade or forcible occupation, of upwards of 2,000 miles of the eastern coast of South America, including the entire Gulf of Mexico, with its important sea-ports, and the two greatest navigable rivers in the universe, the Amazons and La Plata. As to the political objects of France in such a movement, or her motives, beyond what might be immediately ostensible—whether of permanent conquest, which she disclaimed, or a desire to withdraw the attention of her subjects from matters nearer home, he (Mr. E. Tennent) was not disposed then to speculate; but the main point on which his constituents and the mercantile interests of the empire at large were vitally concerned was not merely the injury or interruption, but the actual suspension and paralysis, of all commerce with South America, which had resulted from the military operations of France upon her coasts. He said the trade with America generally, for, although Mexico and Buenos Ayres were the points nominally assailed, the injury inflicted was not confined to those points alone, but extended to New Orleans and Havannah, on the Atlantic, and to Valparaiso and Lima, on the Pacific, which formerly received our exports for re-shipment to the Gulf and the La Plata, but which being now equally excluded with ourselves no longer exhibited a demand for our produce. The broad principles on which Great Britain had always maintained the right of blockade—a latitude which, to say the least, had not been circumscribed by the noble Lord opposite (Lord Palmerston) in his correspondence with the Mexican merchants—rendered it imperative on this country at all times to see that our trade was not interrupted upon frivolous pretences, or at the caprice of parties who wanted either the power or the inclination to bring their causes of complaint to a speedy adjustment. And looking at the whole circumstances of the recent French aggressions in South America—not in Mexico alone, but in Buenos Ayres and in Brazil—he was bound to say, that he had never yet met with a case which could less bear the test of such a scrutiny, or in which weak and fraudulent grounds of quarrel had been followed up with greater arrogance and bad faith. Only look at the relative circumstances of the parties. The grounds of quarrel with Mexico sprung originally out of the positive weakness of that young and disturbed State; and the demand for reparation had been followed up by France with all the pertinacity of a designing Power, conscious of its own overwhelming strength. The original demand urged by France was for compensation to French subjects for injuries alleged to have been sustained by them during an insurrection at Mexico in the year 1828, ten years ago; and although the amount originally demanded was but 122,590 dollars, some idea might be formed of the base principle on which the indemnity must have been estimated when no less a sum than 74,000 dollars, or about 16,000*l.* sterling, out of the amount, was awarded to one French bookseller, as compensation for books stated by him to have been carried off by the rioters; and another item was a sum of 20,000 dollars, or about 4,000*l.* to a pastry-cook for sweetmeats devoured by the soldiers during the tumult! The matter lay over unsettled from that period till 1836, but in 1836 the Baron Deffaudis arrived in the Gulf as the Minister Plenipotentiary of France, followed by a formidable naval force. The claim then suddenly expanded from 120,000 to 170,000 dollars and during the two years of fruitless negotiation which ensued it amounted to the immense sum of 600,000 dollars, by the admission of every claimant who chose to prefer his complaint of losses to the French authorities. Whatever delay there might have been originally created by the Mexican government, further postponement became impossible so soon as a formidable French force was anchored in their roadstead, and they at once admitted the principle of the injuries alleged, and proposed to refer the amount of compensation to a commission, formed half of Mexicans and half of French subjects. This proposition was rejected by M. Deffaudis. The Mexicans then entreated him to admit the intermediation of any disinterested Power, and America and England were each understood to have offered their interference; but even this proposal was contumeliously rejected, and M. Deffaudis, in his ultimatum, addressed to the Mexican authorities in March, 1838, designated it as:—

> "The ridiculous proposition of submitting to the arbitration of a third power, as if France was treating of those ordinary questions of doctrines or interests upon which doubts might exist; or, as if the dignity and duties of France could ever permit her to leave to a third party, the case of deciding whether the plunders, the violences, and the assassinations, of which her citizens had been the victims, were, or were not, the subject of sufficient reparation."

But, surely, when the question to be arbitrated was a pecuniary equivalent for a civil injury, the amount of that compensation, as in the case of the bookseller and the pastry cook, might have been considered, without offence to the dignity of France, a fit subject for disinterested calculation. So far, however, from submitting to so fair an arbitrament, the Baron delivered, in the same document, the final terms of his demand as computed up to that date, his rapacity apparently increasing with every submission of Mexico. The amount then claimed was, as stated by Lord Sandon, 600,000 dollars for claims then ascertained, the absolute distribution of which France reserved to herself treble that sum, or 1,800,000 dollars, for claims not yet investigated, but to be brought forward forthwith; and 200,000 dollars for the costs of the expedition to enforce the demand. And even this monstrous exaction was not to be permitted to be paid unless on the terms of Mexico admitting France to fresh commercial privileges, which, it was well known, she could not comply with, without violating existing treaties with other states; and delivering up her officials and judges, against whom charges of the most infamous kind had been adduced, to be tried as robbers and assassins. This proposition of the French minister concluded as follows;—

> "Such are the demands which the undersigned is charged to address once, and for the last time, to the Mexican government—inasmuch as the present note is an ultimatum, and the determination of France, herein contained, is irrevocable. The undersigned will wait for an answer until the 15th of April. Should (which God forbid) the answer be in the negative, upon only one point—should even be

doubtful upon only one point—should it, finally, be delayed beyond the 15th of April, the undersigned must then immediately place the conclusion of this affair in the hands of M. Bazoche, commander of his Majesty's naval forces, of which a division is at present on the coast of Mexico; and this superior officer will put in force the orders he has already received."

M. Deffaudis, was speedily superseded by Admiral Baudin with a formidable naval force, which arrived from Brest in October last year; and, after a few preliminary forms, of pretended negotiation, hostilities commenced, by the bombardment and capture of the island fortress of San Juan d'Ulloa and the subsequent reduction of Vera Cruz; and, to this hour, France held possession of the entire gulf of Mexico, from the mouth of the Mississipi to the bay of Campeachy, with the sole exception, he believed, of Tampico, which being in insurrection against the Mexican government,, was supposed to have some sympathy with the invaders. Not one package of goods shipped from this country to Mexico in the year 1838 had been permitted to be landed in the ordinary way, and in January last, at the period when the last advices left, no less than 30 British vessels were hovering off the gulf, with English goods on board to the value of no less than 750,000*l*. And whilst the French professed, that this was only a temporary step, to secure the just compliance with their demands, their government has actually sent out M. Vaillant as governor of the fortress of San Juan d'Ulloa, and the adjacent district of Vera Cruz. He (Mr. E. Tennent) would not have called the attention of the House to these details on Mexico, were it not for the purpose of exhibiting the striking similarity of proceeding and apparent identity of purpose with which France had attacked the other states of South America upon equally frivolous grounds, and still held possession of their territory with equal pertinacity. Her assault upon Buenos Ayres originated in the most unfounded assumptions. She demanded satisfaction from the Argentine confederation for the alleged false imprisonment of French subjects; and, secondly, for their forcible enrolment in the state militia. It was demonstrated to her in reply, that not one single solitary subject of France was enrolled in the forces of Buenos Ayres, and that two alone were incarcerated in her prisons—one a sutler on a charge of robbery, and the other a soldier, he believed, who was condemned for assassination. Even after this satisfactory explanation, Admiral Le Blanc, in April, 1838, persisted in directing his forces to the mouth of the river La Plata, took possession of the island of Martin Garcia, and, to this hour, enforced a strict blockade, to the utter exclusion of all European commerce. But not only had France thus excluded us from the profitable trade of the La Plata and the Gulf of Mexico, but on another, and, if possible, a still less tenable ground, she had recently taken forcible occupation, and. to this hour, holds possession of the entire territory of Brazilian Guiana, on no other pretence, and by no other authority, than an alleged inaccuracy in the wording of the Treaty of Utrecht, which, it is asserted, describes inaccurarely the relative boundaries of French and Portuguese Guiana. That such an error, that a geographical error, did exist in the wording of the treaty of Utrecht, on this point, there could be no manner of doubt; but it was also equally certain that it was a matter of easy adjustment; and, by the terms of the treaty of Paris, in 1817, it was expressly determined, that commissioners should be mutually appointed to determine the boundary; and that if at the expiration of one year they should not be able to come to an understanding, "the two contracting parties should proceed by friendly accord to form another arrangement under the mediation of Great Britain, and conformably to the Treaty of Utrecht, concluded under the guarantee of that power." The facts of the case were, that France, in 1837, sent an armameut to the mouth of the Amazons, took possession of the island of Mapa, an important station, commanding the entrance of the river, and being joined and supported by the Indians and natives, made a forcible landing on the main, and have continued ever since in actual possession, not only of the disputed points, but of the entire territory of Brazilian Guiana, a territory proverbially the richest in South America, with a coast line of 300 miles towards the Atlantic, and extending westward for 1,500 miles along the shores of the Amazons, till it meets the confines of Peru and Colombia and comprising vast districts, traversed by innumerable navigable rivers, which open thousands of miles of the most productive country. This was a proceeding on the part of France which had, as yet, attracted but little attention in this country; but he should like to know from the noble Lord, the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, whether that occupation had been made by France in pursuance of the terms and in conformity with the provisions of the treaty of Paris? Whether it was with the concurrence of the government of Brazil? And finally, whether it had taken place after the mediation and under the sanction of Great Britain? On the score of its importance to British commerce, it did appear to him that it was impossible to over-estimate the interest of these questions. And the injury inflicted was severely felt by those merchants and manufacturers who had been now for twelve months shut out from their once extensive trade with South America. Large shipments designed for Buenos Ayres and Mexico, had, on the commencement of hostilities, been sent home undelivered, with the entire loss of freight and interest, and the danger of forfeited insurance. Our manufactures at home were also likely to suffer. Logwood, which was formerly brought in great quantities from Laguna de Terminos in the bay of Campeachy, had, of course ceased to be shipped to England, although not a single French vessel of war had been at Laguna since the 18th of May, 1838, when the blockade was declared. The consequence was, that this article, which ordinarily sold for 8*l*. per ton, was now so high as 24*l*. in Manchester, and his informant apprised him that the calico printers had actually to stop their works in those styles which required that particular dye, as the market could neither afford the necessary supply of logwood, nor an adequate remuneration at the present prices for the work if produced. The enormous British capital lent to the Mexican government, or embarked in mining speculations in that country, amounting to ten millions sterling, had been placed in the utmost peril by the interruption of the Custom House receipts on which the loans were secured, and, by the prohibition of importing quicksilver, without which the mines could not be worked. And what added to the irritation of the matter was the fact, that this exclusion seemed now to be directed almost exclusively against ourselves, a report having been lately prevalent that American vessels had recently been permitted to pass the blockade into Mexican ports, whilst those of England alone were refused permission. Indeed, he could not afford a more perfect illustration of the perplexity in which British merchants were involved by these proceedings, than the evidence of a card, under the tempting promise of sailing under French colours: a French ship, the Admiral Preville, Jacques Fauvel, master, was advertised as lying in the London Docks for freight and passengers to Vera Cruz. And if he (Mr. Tennent) was rightly informed, an opulent gentleman, formerly a Member of that House, had actually chartered her for the Gulf of Mexico, where, at present, on the showing of the noble Lord opposite (Lord Palmerston), a British merchantman durst not show herself even for the purpose of ascertaining the raising or continuance of the French blockade. There was another subject, connected in some degree with these affairs on which he was anxious to obtain information from the noble Lord opposite, (Lord Palmerston). The noble Lord would recollect that by an insurrection against the Brazilian government in 1835, the British residents at Para had been most serious sufferers to the amount, he believed of 80,000*l*. to 100,000*l*. A demand for indemnification had been made by our Minister, Mr. Hamilton, then resident at Rio Janeiro, but refused by the authorities of Brazil. The opinion of the law officers of England being, however, in favour of the claim, Mr. Hamilton was, as he (Mr. Tennent) understood, directed to press for compliance, which, up to Mr. Hamilton's return to this country last year, had been ineffectual. Mr. Ousely had since gone out as Minister to the Court of Brazil, and he (Mr. Tennent) understood that he was to have taken with him instructions on this head from the noble Lord; but by advices received from Rio since Mr. Ousely arrived, it appeared that he had not been furnished with those instructions previous to his departure, and that up to that period they had not been received from England. He would be glad to know, whether those instructions had been issued and acted upon, and with what result? and he should conclude by moving, in addition to the papers sought by the noble Lord relative to Mexico and Buenos Ayres, for, "copies of any communications received from the government of France or that of Brazil, relative to the claims advanced by the latter to a portion of Portuguese Guiana; and of any reference sought by either party to the arbitration of England (conformably to the terms of the Treaty of Paris, in 1817), previous to the recent military occupation of Portuguese Guiana by a French force; also, copies of any despatches or correspondence from the British minister resident at Rio Janeiro, on the subject of the indemnification of British subjects resident at Para, for losses sustained during the insurrectionary movements against the Brazilian government in 1835."

Mr. *Grote* said, that he owed it to a very numerous body of petitioners, who had intrusted him with a petition on the subject this day, and also to the feeling which he knew to be extensively prevalent among a considerable part of the mercantile constituency he represented, to say a very few words on the subject before the House. No man was less disposed than he was to multiply or carve out unnecessary opportunities for criticising the conduct of the executive Government with respect to its foreign policy. But although he recognised the propriety of exercising great forbearance on that subject, yet he must say he was not prepared to draw the line so strictly as the noble Lord. He was not prepared to abstain from making those criticisms which on certain occasions that conduct seemed to require. Although he perfectly felt the necessity of looking at the world as one great whole, and of speaking of existing circumstances under the conviction that what was said in London was read at Paris and at Washington—a circumstance, by the by, which occasionally appeared to be lost sight of by some hon. Members—still, when the opinions of English merchants, who felt themselves to be seriously injured by the policy of the Government, were strongly expressed, it was absolutely necessary that they should find an echo in that House. There were three points about this case which rendered it impossible for those suffering from the present state of affairs in Mexico to remain silent. First, the extent of the inconvenience which they suffered; next, the conviction, which appeared to be thoroughly well grounded, the moment we looked into the nature of the complaint preferred, that the blockade enforced against Buenos Ayres and Mexico did not repose on any solid or well-grounded causes of complaint; and, thirdly, that there had been what he could not but call a want of alacrity on the part of the Government to extend protection to the English merchants by not keeping up that amount of naval force which the circumstance required. As to the extent of the injury which had been sustained by the English merchants, he was almost prevented from going into that subject, because the noble Lord who brought this motion forward had so fully addressed himself on that point. There was a most extensive amount of British capital embarked in the American states. No less than seven large mining establishments were conducted altogether by British capital, and which mines furnished, he believed, nearly the whole supply of silver which now came to England; and that supply, he was informed, amounted to from eight millions to ten millions of dollars annually, while the imports from Buenos Ayres was not less in value than 700,000*l.* annually. The whole of this trade had been entirely put a stop to by the blockade of Vera Cruz and Buenos Ayres. Moreover, those persons who had sent out manufactured goods to those countries had sustained very considerable loss, from their vessels having been warned off, in consequence of which the whole venture was rendered entirely valueless. Under these circumstances it seemed to him both natural and unavoidable that the merchants, who had been subject to such inconvenience, should try to investigate the cause, and should express a desire to know whether there was a sufficient justification for the French Government to impose upon them the extreme inconvenience they had sustained. He could not wonder, when they looked at the cause of quarrel between the French Government and the Governments of Mexico and Buenos Ayres, that they complained not only that they suffered great loss, but that they suffered it without any solid or well-grounded international reason. It seemed to him that the French Government had throughout their dispute with those two States mixed up with their demand of redress for an alleged gone-by private wrong, an attempt to establish certain principles for the future. This, he thought, was conduct altogether inadmissible and unaccountable. The conduct of the French in respect to the blockade against Mexico appeared to the British merchants still more singular, and still less explicable, when they were informed that with regard to the port of Callao on the eastern coast of America, they were acting upon totally different principles. The French commander on that coast had refused to recognise an efficient blockade, established by the Government of Chili, and had actually taken into that port French and Chilian merchant-vessels, although there was a sufficient Chilian force there. This certainly did show that the French naval commanders were not disposed to acknowledge the same rule when they made a case for themselves, which they enforced when they made a case against others. In regard to the protection which might have been afforded to our trade with Mexico by means which were in the power of the executive Government to have offered, he could not but think that if that had been done two months sooner, which had now been done, for instance, the arrival of Mr. Pakenham, instead of being towards the end of December, had been towards the end of October, Mexico would not have been in the position in which it was at present placed; and that the conference which was held would have terminated successfully and prosperously for British commerce, and the questions in dispute would have been amicably adjusted if Commodore Douglas had appeared earlier with his fleet off the coast. The French expedition sailed from Brest on the 13th of September, and arrived at Vera Cruz on the 25th of October, whereas Mr. Pakenham arrived on the 25th of December, and Commodore Douglas on the 31st of December. It was much to be regretted that the arrival both of Mr. Pakenham and Commodore Douglas did not take place two months earlier. The conduct of France in refusing to submit the matter in dispute between herself and the two American Governments to a third and independent party, was a circumstance not to be overlooked in the present state of affairs—a circumstance, as it seemed to him, well calculated to have added greatly and bitterly to the losses that the English merchants had suffered under. When he recollected that in the case of the disagreement between the French Government and the United States of America, France without any dishonour to herself, referred for settlement to the arbitration of England—a matter which had been longer pending than the matter in dispute between France and Mexico, and it did seem to argue a want of uniformity and consistency on the part of the French Government, which certainly on the present occasion, and which, attended as it had been by deplorable consequences to British merchants, could not but meet with remark in this House. The noble Lord, the Secretary for Foreign Affairs, had said, "Why, you are not prepared to go to war with France!" and he held out certain alarming prospects on this subject; and argued that the British Government could not do more than it had done, unless we were prepared to go to war and resist this blockade. Now he (Mr. Grote) could not admit that the noble Lord was entitled to assume this position, or that he was entitled, as he had done in this argument, to suppose that English modern intervention would have been so totally without effect as he seemed to imagine. It seemed to him, reasoning from the papers that were before the House, and with an imperfect knowledge of what the noble Lord had or had not done with the French Government, that if the noble Lord had at an early period instituted an inquiry into the circumstances which had since led to this blockade, in a sufficiently energetic and decided manner, the disposition on the part of the French Government to resist it would have been much less strenuous than the noble Lord seemed to apprehend. He should not have taken part in this debate if he had not considered the question one of great importance, more especially to a large portion of his own constituents. He hoped that the news which had appeared within the last day or two in the newspapers of the intention on the part of the French to raise the blockade, and of a prospect of an amicable settlement by Admiral Baudin consenting to accept the mediation of the English Ambassador would prove true, and that British commerce would be placed in that state of security which it formerly enjoyed.

Sir *Stephen Lushington:* Assuming that the information before the House was correct, and gave a fair view of the circumstances of the question connected with the motion of the noble Lord, and that the House was in possession of the more important facts on both sides, he must confess (from all he knew) that he could not view the conduct of the French Government, whether with respect to their proceedings in the Gulf of Mexico, or with respect to their very extraordinary conduct at the port of Callao, on the other side of the American coast, without the deepest regret, and he must declare without some feelings of alarm. The conduct of the French Government had been such, that if not sufficient to excite the jealousy of her Majesty's Government, was at least enough to call forth, on the part of that House, the strictest vigilance. He entirely agreed in many of the observations which had fallen from the noble Lord, the Member for Liverpool (Lord Sandon), and concurred with him in the opinion, that the most unjustifiable pretences had been set up by the French Government, and that claims had been made by that Government against the state of Buenos Ayres, which they never would have ventured to have made against any country that was competent to defend itself. He had never yet heard that it was a matter of absolute right that the inhabitants of one country lived in another country, receiving the aid and protection of its laws. He always thought it was a permission to be conceded upon terms, and according to the discretion of the country which gave that permission. Above all things, he never yet before heard, that in affairs between nations it was to be permitted for one State to say to another, "I will have a commercial treaty from you, whether you will or not. You are not to be the judge of your own advantage, and what suits your own convenience. You are not to exercise the first, greatest, and most important right which appertains to an independent State, that of making treaties of commerce according to your own judgment." And was France to say—"You must not deny me that treaty of commerce. I am not to be treated as a second-rate Power; I will insist upon the treaty as a right?" He confessed, that he viewed this matter with great suspicion. It was now for the first time, in all his knowledge of the history of modern days, that he had known any State boldly and openly stand up and put forth such pretensions as France had ventured to do. He thought it his duty to say thus much, because he was of opinion, that that which he most deeply sought for, and most earnestly hoped would remain, namely, pacific relations between this country and France would be best advanced by speaking the truth, and letting the French nation know what was the general feeling of the British people. He meant to use no language of provocation. He recollected the words of his hon. Friend, that what was spoken in that House was soon known not only in London, but at Paris and at Washington. Whenever he spoke of the state of the public relations of this country with others, though he must claim it as a privilege to speak of them, yet he would never, to the utmost of his power, allow any feelings of his to induce him to use language that might by possibility in the remotest degree affect the amicable relations of the world. His noble friend undoubtedly had laid down restrictions which it might be perfectly right and fit for him to abide by as Secretary of State. He said that with regard to the conduct of one foreign nation towards another, it might be inconvenient to discuss it here, because the party inculpated was not present to defend it. It would be very inconvenient for his noble Friend, no doubt, in his public situation to express any decided opinion on such conduct, yet, nevertheless, it was not only the right but the duty of that House to do so. It would seldom occur that a foreign State would not be adequately defended in Parliament; such were the conflicting opinions that usually prevailed among them. But it was a right which, though to be dealt with scrupulously, was the last to be forgotten. He never would give up his right to declare his opinion of the conduct of Russia with respect to Poland, of the conduct of Austria with respect to Italy, or of the conduct of France with respect to Mexico, or any other State in the civilised world. He hoped he should never abuse it, but it was a right too valuable to be for a moment compromised. Now, let it be considered in what manner that right was connected with the dearest and best interests of England. It seldom happened that any dispute arose between one foreign nation and another in which the interests of England were not either directly or indirectly concerned, and often more or less injured. But did he therefore say, "Go to war?" Did he preach a general crusade? No such thing. But there was a limit to all things. Now, the pretences with respect to Buenos Ayres, which France had set up, in justification of her conduct, were frivolous and unfounded. Let them mark what might be the conduct of France if that power were determined to injure the commerce of this country. Not only might it blockade Mexico and Buenos Ayres, but it might blockade every port in the world with which England carried on trade upon similar frivolous pretences, and thus effectually destroy British commerce altogether. He was not urging but deprecating any attempts to bring about a war, except in a case of extreme necessity, by making these observations. With regard to the question of blockade, it was one of very great importance in relation to this country. His noble Friend had said that in his researches into the history and law of nations, he had found no instance in which a blockade was asserted by neutral countries except the blockade was between two belligerent powers. In all his (Sir Stephen Lushington's) reading too upon this subject, he had always found a blockade to be instituted when nations were in a state of war with each other. But here they would get, he feared, into considerable confusion, because nothing perhaps was more dangerous than to attempt to define precisely what that was which constituted absolute war between two countries. In former days (he knew not whether it was a good or a better practice), but prior to the last fifty or sixty years, the usage was to have a declaration of war before the commencement of hostilities; by which notice was given to the whole world that the relations between those countries had been altered. But he could not say so any longer. The usage of the world was altered, and it was now impossible to charge any nation with a breach of the law of nations because hostilities had not been preceded by a declaration of war. The noble Lord had stated, that the relations between France and Mexico were in reality those of war. Where a nation was at war with another it had a right to make reprisals: but this she must not do—which France had done, and in so doing had violated the usages of nations—she must not, she is not at liberty to avail herself of all the advantages of peace and amicable relations on the one part with a third Power, and expose that third Power to all the disadvantages of war on the other. He would give no particular opinion whether France was or was not at war with Mexico. How stood the notification? His noble Friend had given a satisfactory explanation to the House on that point, that the uniform practice was to give the merchants of any country whose interests would be affected by such a state of things, notice of the fact, but that notification did not sanction the blockade nor establish its legality. They were not called upon to judge of the consequences of the facts. It was the business of any Government to whom such intimation had been made, to notify the same to the subjects of that State; but it was in the discretion of the parties to whom the intimation was made what effect they would give to the announcement, and to judge how their commercial proceedings would thereby be influenced. These rights were of the greatest value, and they were common to all nations. There was not one law affecting other countries and a different law applicable to England. Vessels belonging to this country might, under these circumstances, enter a port which had been notified as under blockade, and might under these circumstances be detained by the blockading force. And it was plain that such a seizure would not, at least until all other remedies had been tried, justify a recourse to arms. Fault had been found with his noble Friend by the noble Lord opposite, that although he had received information of the blockade not having been duly maintained, that he had not notified the circumstance, and founding upon an opinion which he drew from Lord Stowell, the noble Lord had stated that if a blockade was not maintained in such a form as to make it dangerous for any vessel to enter the blockaded port, that then the blockade could not be maintained, as it had not been supported by an adequate force. To talk of a blockade proclaimed as extending over a whole district, and of being in force when the blockading force had been absent for several months, would, no doubt, be vague, nugatory and absurd. The only cases of exception that were allowed in such cases were stress of weather and storms. But suppose that his noble Friend had sent intimation to the merchants of this country that the blockade had not been duly maintained, and that twenty or thirty ships had, in consequence, been dispatched to Vera Cruz, and found on their arrival there that they could not gain admission to the harbour, and had been thus compelled to come back without delivering their cargoes, what would have been said of the conduct of his noble Friend? He entirely approved of the course which his noble Friend had adopted under the circumstances of the case; he thought that he had acted with great prudence, for it was surely the duty of our foreign Minister not to take upon himself responsibility without duly considering the consequences which might ensue. It was also said that his noble Friend had answered the complaints made by the noble Lord and other hon. Members who had taken part in this debate of the loss sustained by British commerce, that they had no alternative but to go to war. He did not understand that to be the real statement of his noble Friend. He did not understand his noble Friend to say by any means that there was no middle course. Whether the noble Lord opposite made his charge against his noble friend from access he may have had to documents in Downing-street he could not say, but certainly in his opinion there was a distinct middle course open for her Majesty's Government. It was the duty of the Government in the first place to remonstrate with the French Government to represent to them the injury which British commerce had received, to tell them that it was undergoing the greatest deprivation, and to say to them boldly and plainly, that the Government of this country expected prompt satisfaction and redress. He could not take upon himself to say, whether his noble Friend had made these representations. He did not think it would be proper or consistent with the public interest to press upon his noble Friend for a direct answer to that question. It would be extremely inconvenient to call for such explanations, when they had been told by his noble Friend, that negotiations were depending on this question with the Government of France, and he was confident, that under these circumstances, no one would call upon her Majesty's Government to disclose the nature of the correspondence that was in progress. He did not quarrel with the noble Lord and hon. Members opposite as to what they argued the duty of the Government was in this case; but he did find fault with them for this—they had all assumed, that the Government had adopted a different line of conduct from that which they believed to be the proper course. He entirely approved, for his own part, of the caution which the noble Lord had evinced. He had the honour to represent as great a commercial community as the noble Lord, the Member for Liverpool, and he was confident that his constituents would agree with him, when he said, that in cases where he could not rely on specific facts, he would endeavour to confine himself to simple acknowledgments. It was particularly necessary for the noble Lord to act on this principle, and not to go beyond the mere acknowledgment of what could not be disputed; because, in this great commercial country, where there was so much rivalship and competition, every communication the noble Lord could write would be spelt, letter by letter, to endeavour to find out some little scintilla which would induce them to enter upon some speculation. He begged to remind hon. Members, that his noble Friend had stated, that his object was to make that impression on the French Government which truth and justice demanded. He was also sure, that nothing which had been said by any hon. Member during the course of this debate could be represented as conveying any feeling of hostility towards the French Government. They merely asked that government to reconsider—to retrace—their steps, and to give redress where they had good grounds for saying that the French were to blame. He considered, that the preservation of the alliance between this country and France was the great safeguard of the peace of Europe. He thought it essential to the prosperity and mutual interests of both countries, that the friendly intercourse which had now happily been established between them should be encouraged and maintained. They only desired to let the French Government know, that they were wide awake—that they had a full desire to accomplish their object by recourse to all conciliatory measures; but, at the same time, they were resolved to have what justice and their rights required.

Mr. Alderman *Thompson* felt called upon to say a few words on the subject before the House. The noble Lord opposite (Lord Palmerston) had said, that the commercial interests had no right to complain of the blockade on the coast of Mexico, and that he, on the part of the Government, had done all that was required, and that a sufficient force had been provided in the Gulf of Mexico to protect the persons and properties of British subjects. To these propositions he (Mr. Alderman Thompson) dissented, and thought he should be able to show, that the noble Lord was mistaken. He held in his hand a letter from a British merchant who was at Vera Cruz at the time of the bombardment of San Juan d' Ulloa. The letter was addressed to his partner, and bore date the 27th of November, the day of the attack. It stated, that the Express packed arrived that day, that her Majesty's sloop the Satellite had arrived on the 25th, that at the instance of several British merchants, her commander had been induced to remain for one day, but stated, that he could not possibly remain any longer. "Look," said the writer of the letter, "at our unfortunate condition! See how utterly we are deserted by the British Government! We are without even a boat to enable us to get on board the packet." The letter proceeds to state, that through the assistance of the French Consul, a boat was procured at Sacrificios for that purpose. It further stated, that the United States had no fewer than three ships of war on that station, while England had not one. "The American vessels offered their services to us. What a position for British subjects to be placed in! Don't let this pass unnoticed." The hon. Gentleman then read another extract from a letter written by the same individual on board the Express packet, on the evening of the same day, which stated, that the Satellite would sail the next day. and, that then there would be only a miserable packet to represent the British nation in that quarter. He thought, that he had supplied to the House a very satisfactory answer to the noble Lord's statement, that the merchants of this country had nothing whatever to complain of on the score of the transaction alluded to. With regard to another statement of the noble Lord, that the Commodore of the West India station was authorized to send a force to Vera Cruz, he (Alderman Thompson) had authority to state, that the Satellite was sent by the Governor of Jamaica solely for the purpose of transporting specie. And, in confirmation of this view, he would mention that the commander of the Satellite stated, in reply to the application of the British residents at Vera Cruz, that "he would stay until to-morrow, the 28th, but that he could not stay longer, as he would not be acting in accordance with his instructions." The noble Lord had spoken in high terms of Mr. Ashburnham's services. What were the facts? The French Admiral insisted on being paid the full amount of the original claim, being 600,000 dollars in compensation for alleged injuries inflicted on French subjects, and 200,000 dollars more "to pay the expenses." This entire sum of 800,000 dollars he required them to pay within fifteen days, the alternative being, that he would bombard Vera Cruz. What evidence had they of the efforts used by Mr. Ashburnham to settle these important differences? At all events, whatever interference he resorted to appeared to have been wholly unsuccessful. With regard to the French claims, he would observe, that the amount of 600,000 dollars appeared to be merely assumed. A portion of the claim was for alleged injuries to a Dr. Dulong, who had been notoriously intriguing for the situation of chief physician at Panama. He should wish to know, what the French would think of an English physician thrusting himself forward by such means for the post of principal physician to one of the Parisian hospitals? The noble Lord, the Secretary for Foreign Affairs, had boasted of his great exertions in behalf of the mercantile interests. It was unfortunate, that they should not be so sensible as the noble Lord desired of the merit of those services, and they should not have gratitude enough even to acknowledge them. The noble Lord had given no satisfactory proof that the important commercial interests of this country had been sufficiently cared for in this instance. And here he might observe, in passing, that no trade had been made more profitable to British merchants than the trade with the South American states. And no circumstance in modern times had been hailed with greater satisfaction than the announcement, when it was made in Parliament, that treaties had been formed with these independent states. From the mode in which these interests had been latterly neglected, he feared that the British merchant was likely to be deprived of these benefits for the future.

Mr. *C. Wood* said, that the allusion which had been made to the conduct of the Admiralty rendered it necessary for him to trespass for a short time on the attention of the House. Neither the noble Lord who made the motion nor the hon. Gentleman, pretended to say, that any actual injury had been experienced by the British residents in Mexico from the want of protection by a British force? Neither of them pretended to say, that, in any one instance, anything more could have been done than was done, even if the whole British navy had been present. He would beg leave to state to the House what had been done since last spring by the Board of Admiralty for the protection of British interests in this part of the globe. At the end of April, the Board of Admiralty thought it necessary, for the protection of the interests of our commerce in that quarter, to send out a permanent officer of a higher rank than it had been customary to send previously; and Commodore Douglas accordingly proceeded to Jamaica, for the purpose of remaining there permanently to superintend the naval arrangements on that portion of the West Indian station. From the first of June last (exclusive of smaller vessels) he had at his disposal eight ships of war, and according to his report of the 14th August, there was a steam vessel besides. On the 25th September he reported, in addition to these, a frigate. At no period, up to the 1st of December, had he less than eight ships of war under his control. He could, therefore, have given most effective assistance, had he received any communication from Mexico that it was required. Had our consul at Vera Cruz or Tampico communicated with him to that effect, the assistance would have been immediately rendered. Neither he (Mr. Wood) nor any one else had ever said, that the Satellite had been sent to Vera Cruz, with the view of protecting British commercial interests there. What he had said was, that from the 16th of March, 1838, there had been a sloop of war always stationed in the Gulf of Mexico, now at Vera Cruz, now at Tampico, sometimes absent for a time to communicate with Havannah or the Commodore. The letter which had been read by the hon. Gentleman opposite, did not contain the slightest allusion to any injury as having been inflicted upon any of the British residents at Vera Cruz. The trepidation under which the writer of the letter appeared to labour was altogether unnecessary, as the bombardment of the castle of San Juan d'Ulloa was well known to be the object which the French then had in view, and in consequence of the distance of the castle from the town, there was not the slightest danger to the inhabitants. The French had no object beyond that of reducing the castle. With reference to the application from the merchants which had been alluded to by the hon. Gentleman, and the want of attention to their request, which was complained of, what was the case? The first application was received on the 31st of July. It complained of the want of protection to British trade, because several British vessels had been warned off by the French blockading squadron. This, at least, could not have been prevented by the presence of a British vessel, for it was only the ordinary course of a blockade. A request was also made, that orders might be given to the packets to bring away treasure on account of private merchants. The Admiralty, by letter of the 1st of August, informed them that a compliance with this request would be an infringement of an acknowledged blockade. There was surely no want of courtesy here. His noble Friend, the Secretary for Foreign Affairs, was the same day made acquainted with the particulars of the memorial, and immediately communicated with the French Government, from whom, on the 13th of the same month, (almost by return of post) an answer was received, stating, that the transport of specie from Vera Cruz by the packet ships would be readily assented to, but that the forwarding of merchandise could not, of course, be permitted. This answer was immediately forwarded to the memorialists, and corresponding orders sent to the superintendent of packets. He could not see what ground there was here for the charge of treating these memorialists with any want of courtesy. The blockade of Callao had been alluded to, but that blockade was plainly inefficient—a mere paper blockade—while that of Mexico was, in all respects, effectual. This was, indeed, beyond all dispute, except during a short period when sickness, to which Europeans in that climate were very subject, prevailed. On the whole he must declare, that it was most erroneous to assert, that any practical injury to British interests had taken place in reference to this transaction.

Mr. *Ward* thought, that the debate would be of great use, if its only practical result were to enforce the arguments which the Government of this country was bound to address to the Government of France with respect to the injury done to British interests by the course which that Government was now taking in Mexico. He could not help contrasting the sound principles laid down by the Mexican government throughout the whole of this dispute with the exorbitant, arrogant, and insulting tone assumed by the representative of France; nor could he help thinking that the commercial interests of this country were sacrificed without any sufficient cause, not to any substantial reason of complaint on the part of France, but to some imaginary claims which that nation urged, but which she refused to submit to any fair and impartial tribunal. One of the claims on the part of France was to dictate to the Government of Mexico a law authorizing French citizens at all times to exercise retail trade in Mexico. Another was a claim of 600,000 dollars for compensation in respect of injuries alleged to have been suffered by French subjects residing in Mexico. Now, the Mexican government had shown every disposition to act fairly with respect to both these demands. Rather than risk the continuation of hostilities they had offered to make a concession as to the amount claimed by the French, and, in point of fact, the French inhabitants of Mexico did exercise retail trade in Mexico, without any interference on the part of the Mexican government, and neither that government nor the congress had ever thought of prohibiting the French inhabitants from exercising retail trade. But when France claimed a right for her subjects to exercise such trade in Mexico, under all circumstances and in all time, that was a concession which Mexico refused to make. There was one more point to which he wished to advert: the mediation which had been offered and refused, but which there were now hopes of seeing accepted, seemed the only means of putting an end to the differences between France and Mexico which interfered so materially with our commerce; for it would be impossible for France to bring the contest to a practical issue. If the French took possession of the town of Vera Cruz they would be able to effect nothing; for that town was situated in the midst of a desert, all supplies had to be brought from a distance, and the whole population around would be in league against the foreigners in possession of Vera Cruz. Then the climate, which was such as an European constitution could not support, must render the French occupation very precarious; nor would the situation of the invaders be better if they penetrated into the interior of the country and reached the table land, and even Mexico itself; they would there find a people of Spanish blood, not deficient in courage, who would effectually resist their attack. It was the duty, therefore of the noble Lord, the Secretary of Foreign Affairs, to do every thing in his power to extricate Mexico from her embarrassments and to bring the dispute to a close. He could not be in a better position for that purpose than he was at present, for the honour of France had been satisfied, and every just concession had been made on the part of Mexico. If the motion were withdrawn it would be under the firm persuasion that the noble Lord would make use of the present opportunity, and, after the sentiments which had been in that debate expressed from all parties in the House, the noble Lord could not fail to be successful when he made those representations, which he was bound to make, to the Government of France.

Lord *Eliot* rose to make a few remarks on the observations which had fallen from the learned Doctor opposite (Sir S. Lushington), and to state briefly his opinion on the conduct of her Majesty's Government with respect to the proceedings connected with the Mexican blockade. That learned Gentleman had said, that any blockade to be real and legitimate must be effective in all points, and in this opinion he entirely concurred. Now, it appeared from a letter of the French Admiral Baudin, bearing date the 29th of November, that the blockade was not universal; and, indeed, it was clear, that the squadron there engaged could not effectually blockade a coast extending above 1,500 miles. He would protest, therefore, against an illegal exercise of a questionable right. He hoped, that the negotiation which, he understood, was on foot would speedily terminate the differences unhappily existing between France and Mexico; and he entertained this hope with a greater degree of confidence, because the negotiation between England and France, had been intrusted to her Majesty's representative in the latter country, than whom no man more able, no public servant more faithful, ever existed. He concurred in the importance of maintaining our amicable relations with France; but without any desire to interrupt these relations, it was the duty of that House to interfere whenever the honour and interests of Great Britain were at stake. He thought the country was under great obligations to the noble Lord—for having brought the question forward; for the opinions which had been indiscriminately expressed on all sides of the House, would have the beneficial effect of strengthening the hands of the noble Viscount, and of enabling him to press with greater force the remonstrances which he had no doubt he would address to the French government.

Sir *De Lacy Evans* wished to offer an observation on one point connected with the debate. The learned Doctor, the Member for the Tower Hamlets, had observed, that whatever expressions might have been used in noticing the propriety of defending the interests of British commerce, he hoped, that nothing which took place that night might interfere with our friendly relations with France. He entirely concurred in the expression of that hope, and that appeared to be the universal feeling on the subject; but there was one matter, which must be his apology for addressing the House after the full discussion which the question had received on the subject. Some months back he had been in Paris, and there much had been said of the observations in the English public press regarding the blockade of Mexico. At that time the question was first brought forward. He afterwards had had the honour of an interview with one of the most influential statesmen of France, and it was with that eminent person an object of the greatest anxiety—an object which he wished especially to press on the Liberal party of this country—that in the discussions on that subject here, they should avoid indiscriminate application of the terms Government and France. These terms, however, had, throughout that discussion, been used indiscriminately by hon. Members, and the word France had been used as frequently as the Government of France. He had therefore, thought it right to mention that the influential individual to whom he had alluded, had expressed a desire, that they, in their discussions in this country, should draw a distinction between the policy of the government of the Cabinet of Count Molé, and the feelings of the people of France; and he felt assured, that whatever steps might be taken by the Governments, having a tendency to interrupt the amicable relations existing between the two countries, they would not be sanctioned by the feelings of the people at large.

Sir *R. Peel* thought it had been truly remarked, that the subject under discussion had been exhausted in the present debate, and no speech had contributed in a greater degree to this result than the speech of the hon. Member for the city of London, which was a speech well worthy of the representative of that great mercantile constituency, and the speech of the hon. and learned civilian who had laid down the doctrines and principles of the law of nations with a clearness worthy of the sentiments embodied in that speech. The noble Lord the Secretary for Foreign Affairs, had said, that the French government had fully satisfied him with regard to the French occupation of the Mexican territory—he had said, that the assurances given by the French government upon this subject were formal and satisfactory, and such as to allay any suspicion which might be entertained as to the future intentions of France. If these assurances were of that description, what possible objection could there be to producing them? The impression which the debate had produced on his mind was, that there was very little use in having either a British fleet or a British consul at a foreign station; for it had been contended, that however great a force we might have had in the Gulf of Mexico, it could have afforded no protection to British commerce in that part of the world. Then for what purpose did we maintain a peace establishment? He had thought it was for the protection of British commerce in all parts of the world. It appeared, that there was a large British force on the West India station for the protection of British commerce; in what manner was that force to act? Why it had been said, that a British commodore was stationed at Mexico, and he had power over eight ships of war in the West Indies, which he could command to the Gulf of Mexico if their presence was required; and that, because he had not called for them, it was clear, that no British interest was placed in danger. Now, consider in how difficult a situation that officer was placed; if he were called upon to decide upon his own authority what kind of demonstrations ought to be made towards France while he was left without any instructions from those who were better acquainted with the state of our relations with France, than this commodore could possibly be. Would he not depend upon receiving instructions before it could be necessary for him to act? It was very hard to devolve upon this commodore the responsibility, which properly belonged to the government, who had the power and whose duty it was to send him instructions. The noble Lord who had brought forward the motion, had been represented, in the course of the debate, as having admitted, that in point of fact, British interests had sustained no injury. If the noble Lord admitted that, he did not agree with him; but that noble Lord had, as he (Sir R. Peel) understood, admitted no such thing. He had merely said, that it was not necessary for his argument that any injury should have been actually sustained. Now, the noble Lord had stated, that after the capture of San Juan d'Ulloa, such alarm spread among the British residents at Vera Cruz, that all of them except the consul, left the town, and removed as far as they could from it, taking all their moveables. Then, he asked, when such alarms prevailed, what naval power had we upon the spot? He did not ask what force we had for the purpose of engaging in hostilities against France, or for the purpose of interfering with the blockade, but for the purpose of affording protection to our owu subjects, which France herself would have permitted us to do. Why, thirty English had been protected by the British packet; thus assistance had been afforded by slight means, but if the city were abandoned by all the British, could it be maintained, that a single packet was sufficient for the station? Among the papers already presented, he found a letter dated July, addressed to the Lords of the Admiralty by persons deeply interested in the trade of Mexico, in which it was stated that captain Kirk, with a cargo of the value of 50,000*l.* had returned to Liverpool, having been warned by the French squadron. The captain was permitted to land at Vera Cruz, for the purpose of having an interview with the consignees, which was necessary; but how was the landing effected? To whom was a British merchant indebted for the privilege of landing? Why, he was allowed to land and have his necessary interview with the consignees, solely through the kindness of the captain of an American brig, who lent his boat to convey the English captain to and from Vera Cruz. If this were true, how advantageous to British commerce would have been the presence of a British sloop of war? The noble Lord said, that if we had sent a British squadron to the Gulf of Mexico, it would have afforded no defence to the place unless we were prepared to issue a declaration of war against France. He was the last person in that House to wish to give any intimation of war with that country; he desired to preserve with her the most amicable relations, but this desire would never prevent him from expressing his opinion of the conduct of France when he should think it necessary. He could not concur in the opinion, that the presence of a naval force for the protection of British interests would have been useless. He could conceive that the subordinate authorities of a great power acting at a distance from home, would be restrained from violence by the presence of such a force. Would the noble Lord tell him for what purpose a British fleet was now on that station? The noble Lord said that it was for the purpose of adding moral weight to the representations of the British minister at Mexico. If, then, the presence of a British fleet without any intention to go to war, had such a salutary moral influence over the weaker power, why should it not exercise a like influence over the stronger? Had we anything to exact from Mexico? Then what moral influence could we have over the weaker party that was independent of us? The noble Lord said, that we were not to go all over the world to find whether any two powers were in a state of hostility, and then to insist on their becoming amicable. Perhaps we had no right to interfere in such cases; but if that were correct, what right had we to send a fleet to the Gulf of Mexico, for the purpose of adding naval influence to the representations of our minister there? Suppose Mexico should decline the interference; suppose she should say, "France has no right, by fear of war to ask what is unjust. France has no right to dictate on what terms the citizens of France should set up any trade in Mexico; it is a matter of internal arrangement, which, if we concede, we shall forfeit the independence of our state. It is better to go to war than to suffer this dictation; we must, therefore, refuse the interference of the British consul, and we must decline all mediation." What would be the use of moral influence? for what right should we have to interfere? The noble Lord could not understand the meaning of a fleet to protect our commerce, except in cases of piracy, and he said, that we ought to presume that every government would be actuated by principles of equity and justice, and that our commerce, therefore, was in no danger—then there was no necessity for a fleet. Yet, if unjust conditions were tried to be exacted by strong powers from weak, and that our commercial interests with the weaker power should be affected thereby, this was exactly a case in which to give confidence to the weaker power, and to remove the evil to our own commerce; a squadron would be necessary to act as a control or as a moral influence, if the noble Lord pleased so to call it, over the subordinate authorities of the great power; and this was precisely the occasion when, if a fleet were kept up, it might be usefully employed. He thought, therefore, that there had been no vindication of the Government, for our not having had a naval force in the Gulf of Mexico; and it would be impossible to carry out the boast of Mr. Canning, "that to redress the balance of the old world, he had called into existence the new;" if we allowed our South American influence to be undermined, and if we allowed quarrels to arise and strong powers to enforce, at the point of the sword, satisfaction for alleged injuries, and new principles for the future to be thus established; and unless by our amicable representations in the cause of justice, we prevented the prosecution of aggressions against the independent states of South America.

Viscount *Palmerston* said, that the right hon. Baronet had misunderstood him if he supposed that he had said, that in his opinion we had no alternative between tacit acquiescence and war with France. What he had said, and what he meant was, that the arguments which had been used by hon. Gentlemen opposite appeared to him to lead to such a conclusion; in fact, he had combated those arguments, and in doing so, he had stated his belief that there was another course, the amicable interposition of our good offices between the two parties. The right hon. Baronet need not have asked of what use the presence of a naval force was in adding weight to the representation of our minister, and for reconciling conflicting parties, for his speech proved that he did not undervalue its presence. It was perfectly evident, that it was of advantage, as well in the case of the strong as in the case of the weaker power. The right hon. Baronet asked also what was the use of our naval force if it were not to protect our commerce. He admitted, that such was the main object of our naval force in time of peace, and it was distributed over different parts of the globe, and was specifically employed for that object. He was sure that he need not explain that there were perpetually occurring cases not between third parties, but between our own subjects and the subordinate officers of other governments, or between our own subjects and other governments themselves, when the presence of a naval force was a direct protection, and that its use was not confined merely to such questions as that between France and Mexico. The right hon. Baronet had quoted the case of the captain of a merchantman who had landed during the blockade at Vera Cruz, and that, in the absence of a British ship of war, had been put on shore by an American boat; but of course the right hon. Baronet must be aware, that a ship of war would have had no right to enter the harbour without the consent of the blockading force, so that it would have been impossible for the individual to have got on shore at Vera Cruz from a British man of war without the consent of the blockading squadron. But even as to this, the return which the right hon. Baronet held in his hand showed, that in the month of June, or early in July, a British ship of war sailed from Jamaica, and had arrived at Vera Cruz not long after. The right hon. Baronet had asked, whether before the French had landed and dismantled the fortifications, for they had not carried the town by assault, and after the fort had been taken, it was true that the British subjects had left Vera Cruz, taking with them their moveables? He had stated this on the authority of the consul, who, in a dispatch, informed the Government that the merchants of all nations had left the town, and that he was almost the only person left; and that he had deemed it his duty to be at his post to take charge of the property. The fact that all persons who chose had left in the interval between the dismantling of the town and the capture of the fort, showed that there was ample time for the British residents to withdraw, and he had never heard that any loss had been suffered by any person. One word as to the amendment of the hon. Member for Belfast. He certainly objected to the production of the papers. The hon. Gentleman had asked, whether any application had been made to the two Governments to confirm the treaty of 1817. To which he must reply, that no such application had been made. By the treaty of Vienna—for the provisions of the treaty of Utrecht had long lapsed in the variations of war—and by the 107th article of that treaty, the Prince Regent of Portugal and the Brazils, to manifest, in the most indisputable manner, his consideration for the King of France, agreed to restore Guiana up to the river Amazon, in the 4th and 5th degrees of northern latitude, being the same limitation as it was considered was imposed on Portugal by the treaty of Utrecht. Whilst by the treaty of 1817, between Portugal and France, it was declared, that his most faithful Majesty, to carry into execution the 107th article of the treaty of Vienna, engaged to restore to the king of France, in three months or sooner, French Guiana up to the river Amazon, and specifying the precise degree of longitude west of the island of Ferro. The state of the case between France and Brazil was this:—Compensation never having been made, the French government recently took possession of the contested territory—not, however, to the extent supposed by the hon. Member for Belfast; for he (Lord Palmerston) thought, that the portion of territory occupied by them was very far short of the mouth of the Amazon. A negotiation was at the present moment going on between the two governments, and also a negotiation between this country and France. Pending that negotiation it would not be consistent with the claims of the public service to consent to the production of the additional papers moved for by the hon. Member for Belfast; he, therefore, felt it his duty to object to the production of these papers. The hon. Gentleman, however, might rest assured, that the subject had not escaped the attention of Government. France had been communicated with for the purpose of ascertaining amicably what had been the cause of the occupation, and in the hope that an accommodation between the two governments might be effected.

Sir *Robert Peel* said, that as the noble Lord had received such formal and satisfactory guarantees from the French government on the subject of this occupation, he hoped the noble Lord would give the House also the satisfaction of perusing them.

Viscount *Palmerston* would give the right hon. Baronet an answer on a future occasion as to the production of the papers in question.

Mr. *E. Tennent* wished to know what answer the noble Lord had received with regard to the application of British subjects in Para for compensation.

Viscount *Palmerston* said, the British Government had applied to the Brazilian government for compensation to our subjects. The Brazilian government denied the claim, and offered reasons in support of that denial, and there had been a great deal of correspondence between the two governments on the subject. The last answer of the British Government was sent out some time back, but no reply had as yet been received. He hoped, therefore, that the hon. Gentleman would see that the claims of the public service required that he should postpone his application until the negotiation was closed one way or another.

In reply to an observation (inaudible) by Mr. E. Tennent,

Viscount *Palmerston* said, that the hon. Member was mistaken in supposing that instructions had been sent out to our minister at the Brazils to enforce a positive demand.

Mr. *M. Phillips* thought, that the French had forgotten their honour, and had far outstepped what was due from one nation to another, and especially from the stronger to the weaker, when they required payment of 200,000 dollars as the expenses of the expedition.

Amendment withdrawn. Original motion agreed to.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Wednesday, March 20, 1839.

MINUTES.] Petitions presented. By Lord SANDON, and Messrs. GIBSON, HINDLEY, ALSTON, DUGDALE, MILLS, BAINES, PARKER, MARSLAND, W. DUNCOMBE, PLUMPTRE, SCARLETT, BROADLEY, D'ISRAELI, GRIMSDITCH, and FENTON, from a number of places, against the Beer-laws.—By Mr. MARK PHILLIPS, Mr. HUME, Mr. MUSKETT, Sir JAMES DUKE, WARBURTON, and HINDLEY, from the Beer Sellers and other persons of a number of places, in favour of the Beer-laws; and praying for Inquiry into the system, and for Equality with the Licensed Victuallers.—By Mr. EASTHOPE, from Leicester, and Mr. GREENAWAY, from one place, for a Uniform Penny Postage.—By Mr. BAILEY, from Sudbury, against any further Grant to Maynooth College.—By Mr. O'CONNELL, and Sir C. STYLE, from ten counties in Ireland, for Equal Justice, and Equal Political Rights.—By Mr. PLUMPTRE, from a place in Essex, against any plan of National Education not founded on the Scriptures; also from another place, for the Repeal of the Catholic Emancipation Act.—By Mr. MILES, from Glastonbury, against the Repeal of the Corn-laws.—By Mr. HODGSON, from

Northumberland, for Church Extension in Canada.—By Mr. M. J. O'CONNELL, for Railroads in Ireland.—By Mr. BRAMSTON, from Essex, in favour of the County Courts Bill.—By Mr. POWER, from Waterford, for Corporate Reform.—By Mr. H. LUSHINGTON, from the Tower Hamlets, for Improving the Metropolis.—By Mr. Alderman HUMPHERY, from Aldgate, against the City Police Bill.—By Mr. HUME, from Harbour Grace, and Carbonière (Newfoundland), for Inquiry into the state of the Colony.

SALE OF BEER.] Mr. *Pakington* rose to move the second reading of the Bill for the amendment of the Sale of Beer Act. It had become indispensable that Parliament should interfere upon this subject, and he would shortly explain the nature of the provisions which he had ventured to suggest. It must be in the recollection of hon. Members, that when the present Act passed in 1830, it was predicted by those who were opposed to the Act, that it would be impossible that it should come into operation without producing the most prejudicial and dangerous effects upon the morals of the people. All these predictions had been verified, and the evil had become even greater than had been anticipated. The Beer Act, instead of conducing to the comfort of the labouring classes, had only pandered to their vices. Not a year had elapsed from the passing of the Beer Act before these evils came into operation, and in 1833, three years after the passing of the Act, they had increased to such an extent that a Committee was appointed to investigate this subject, and an Act passed to amend the former Act. That Act had proved a complete nullity. The time had now come when the complaints of the clergy and magistracy on this subject ought to be attended to, and the Beer Act be either totally repealed or greatly modified. He had no doubt he should be opposed on financial grounds, and the hon. Gentleman opposite had moved for returns, which showed an increase in the malt-tax since the passing of the Beer Bill. Now this tax, although not to the same extent, had increased in Scotland, and when it was considered that the duty was taken off beer at the same time, he did not think they could fairly attribute this increase in the malt-tax to the passing of the Beer Act. When the question was last before the House, the Chancellor of the Exchequer wished them to consider the vast amount of capital invested in beer-shops, but the Bill which was now under discussion would leave untouched all those houses where capital to any great extent was vested. When the Beer Act was introduced, no tenderness was shown to the licensed victuallers, notwithstanding the very large amount of capital invested in public-houses. The House would hear, no doubt, of the necessity for free trade in an article so essential to the poorer classes as beer, and of all the monopolies which previously existed. But all this must give way before the paramount consideration of the demoralising tendency of the Sale of Beer Act. On that ground he took his stand, and trusted he should be able to convince the House of the necessity of interfering. In 1833 and 1834 Committees were appointed, before which the strongest evidence was given as to the true nature and demoralising tendency of the Act. The third resolution of the Committee on Drunkenness stated, that there was a house for the sale of intoxicating liquors for every twenty families throughout the country. The House was bound to look also to the effects of intoxication in entailing one of the worst calamities that could befal human nature. By the evidence of Sir H. Ellis, it appeared that in one year, out of 28 patients who were under his care, 19 had become insane through habits of intoxication. The evidence of Mr. Wright, a magistrate of the county of Hants, showed that, in the gaols of that county, out of 118 prisoners, 116 attributed their crimes and misfortunes to their frequenting beer-shops. He would call the attention of the House to the case of several persons who had been executed. The two who were executed in Cambridgeshire for the murder of Lord Hardwicke's keeper, in the last moments of their existence, attributed their crimes to the associates they had picked up in beer-shops. The same had been said by two men who had been executed in Somerset. Petitions from the magistracy of no less than twenty-four counties in England had been presented against these laws; and a meeting was held in the county with which he was connected (Worcestershire), at which men of all parties attended, Liberal as well as Conservative, and expressed their abhorrence of the crimes and outrages which these laws had generated. Perhaps a statement might be made, that the evils arising from the present law were not so great at present as they had been. In answer to that statement, he would only point to the number of petitions that had been presented during the present Session from all classes of society, and to the evidence of numerous magistrates and other persons throughout the country. The hon. Gentleman then read to the House several letters and other documents, all bearing testimony to the demoralizing effect of the Beer-law. Amongst them were, a letter from a clergyman in a small town in Suffolk; a letter from Mr. Foster, of Manchester; and declarations from the chief constable of the town of Halifax, the churchwardens and overseers of Manchester, and the mayor of Worcester. In Leeds, during the three years next before the passing of the Beer Act, there had been brought before the magistrates on charges of drunkenness 639 persons, and during the three years immediately following the passing of that Act, there had been brought up on a similar charge no less than 2,023 persons. He had several other documents from various towns in England, all tending to prove the dreadful effects of the present system; but he would not weary the House by reading them, for he was sure that no hon. Member would attempt to deny that those effects had been produced. Such being the evils of the measure, the question was, what was the best mode of correcting and remedying those grievances. At first he was inclined to think, that no measure would be effectual that did not prohibit the drinking of beer on the premises; but upon further considering the subject, he was disposed to think, that a corrective measure, provided it could be made sufficiently strong, would be the best. Before the Committee of 1833 the Mayor of Leeds was asked, "Do you think that preventing the sale of beer on the premises would tend to remove the inconveniences of the present system?" The answer was, "I think something of that kind was tried some time ago, but it was evaded in this way; persons, after procuring their beer at a beer shop, would go to a kind of partnership concern over the way, where they would drink the liquor." There was a difficulty in applying police regulations to such houses. If drinking on the premises was allowed, the old system must be resorted to, of licensing public-houses. But though he did not wish to throw any reflections on the magistrates, he did not think it expedient, if any other remedy could be devised, that the licensing should, in these excited times, be committed to the magistrates, as it would doubtless subject them to a suspicion which it was desirable should not attach to the bench. He trusted this bill would be suffered to go into committee, when he would explain its provisions. He would only state that, taking the rating of the house as a criterion for allowing a licence had been suggested by the Committee of 1833. He had fixed a rating of 10*l.* per annum in country towns, as being necessary for a licence to sell beer, and it should be remembered that, by the Parochial Assessment Act, the rating must be a real one. It might be said, that the rating was not a proper test, because the value of property was different in different counties, but he did not think this objection of importance, because the value of property was always in proportion to the population. It had been found in large towns that a rating of 10*l.* was insufficient to secure the respectability of the parties keeping these houses, and therefore, he proposed to raise the rating, under those circumstances, to 15*l.* annually. He also proposed, as a further guarantee, that the person applying for a licence should be known to have occupied the premises for a certain time previous to applying for his licence. This, he thought, would prevent improper persons from applying for licences, and also prevent brewers from building houses for the purpose of selling beer by means of their agents. He should wish to prevent the too great facility of transferring licences; at the same time he would introduce a clause allowing the transfer of licences to the widow or the children without delay or hardship. He would also correct an error in the 7th clause, which had crept in, relative to the sale of beer on the premises. He trusted the House would permit the bill to go into committee, and would allow the bill to pass in its integrity. If the bill were not calculated to meet the wishes of every Member, it was calculated to remove many of the evils which were so much complained of. Looking to the question before the House—looking to the pecuniary interests involved on the one hand, and the highest interests of human nature on the other, he trusted the matter would be discussed with calmness and quietness, and that hon. Members would approach the subject with an anxious desire to correct the evils which now existed. The hon. Member concluded by moving the second reading of the bill.

Mr. *Warburton* said, upon the last discussion of this subject he had told the hon. Member, that if the bill was made one of police, if it was to regulate beer-shops, it would meet with no opposition. If the hon. Member would defer the committee until after Easter, he would offer no opposition to the second reading of the bill. Every crime that was now committed was attributed to beer-houses. Why, crimes existed before beer-shops, and even Mr. Wright, who had been quoted, said, that criminals had made confessions, and before the beer-shops were opened, and then they attributed their folly to the associates they made in licensed houses. Mr. Wright attributed the incendiarism of 1829 and 1830 to the beer-shops, when the fact was, the Sale of Beer Act, did not come into operation till October, 1830. Crimes, he was prepared to prove, had not only not increased, but had actually decreased. It was boasted of, only a few nights ago, that the deposits in savings' banks had much increased. Was that a sign of greater drunkenness? So long as beer was made good it would be drunk. To prevent that, they must either make the beer much worse, or prevent its sale altogether. He had no doubt but the country would be more moral if the sale of all intoxicating liquors was prohibited. But were they able to do so? At all events let them not allow beer to be sold under one set of circumstances, and prevent a free trade. Under this bill the landlord would have the whole power of the licensing magistrates, and to that he should prefer the old system. Under the bill, a new house built on purpose for the trade could not be opened at all, and if a person disposed of his business in the beer trade, that house could not be opened by the buyer under one twelvemonth. Then, by the bill, the sellers of beer were to be much heavier taxed—the licence was to be raised from 3*l.* 3*s.* to 5*l.* 5*s.* If the committee were postponed till after Easter, he should not oppose the bill in that stage.

Mr. *W. Duncombe* believed it was almost generally the opinion throughout the country, that beer-shops had much demoralized the people. In the county he had the honour to represent, at the Assizes, the Judge, the Grand Jury, and the Magistrates all said these shops were the fertile sources of crime. He had not the slightest wish to curtail the enjoyments of the people, on the contrary, he wished to elevate them in their moral state, and make them more happy.

Sir *C. Burrell* said, in the country, beer shops were the resort of poachers and thieves, and in them many great crimes had been planned. When the Beer Act was before the House, it was said the poor would have the benefit of cheap and better beer. But was that the case—had not the whole trade fallen into the hands of the large brewers? He knew one brewer who had no less than sixty of these beer shops of his own.

Mr. *Hume* was glad he had given way to the right hon. Gentleman, because his statements would be of importance in enabling the House to come to a proper decision. The House would not, however, take the statements of the hon. Gentleman opposite without some reservation, for it was well known that tens of thousands of the working classes, for whose accommodations these shops had been established, had stated that they now got much better and cheaper beer than formerly. He denied that there was any immorality or intemperance practised in these shops. The poor man could enjoy his beer in moderation, and perhaps in that respect set an example to persons of a higher rank; and he need not refer to club-houses and hells.—in proof of the immorality and intemperance prevailing in the higher classes. He was warranted in making that statement by what had occurred during the fair in Hyde Park after the Coronation, and the evidence there was, that there were more persons of the class of the hon. Gentleman, in point of rank and property, engaged in riot and drunkenness than of the lower classes. The hon. Member referred to the evidence of Col. Rowan and Mr. Mayne for the purpose of showing that drunkenness and crime had diminished in the metropolis and its neighbourhood, and that was ascribed to the increase of beer-houses and the diminished sale of spirits. It appeared also from the same evidence, that the number of convictions which had taken place were much greater in the case of public houses than in beer shops. Of every 100 persons who had been convicted for adulterating beer, ninety-three were publicans and seven the keepers of beer shops. He thought he had offered sufficient evidence to the House, to show that the assertions of the hon. Gentleman were not warranted by the fact.

Sir *Edward Knatchbull* would rather reserve what he had to say until the bill went into Committee. He thought, however, that the hon. Gentleman whatever might be the cause, had taken up a very strong prejudice against the Licensed Victuallers. He thought the Government ought to take the question into its own hands, and introduce some general measures for the better regulation of both beer-houses and public houses. This would probably best please all classes. He thought the hon. Gentleman would have great difficulty in getting his bill passed.

Mr. *Slaney* thought the hon. Member for Kilkenny was mistaken in his criminal statistics—the fact being, that crime instead of having diminished, as he had said, had fearfully increased. Thirty years ago the committals for crime in this country, were only 5,000, now they had swelled to 30,000, while the growth of the population had not been in anything like a corresponding ratio. He thought the beer-houses held out irresistible temptations to the poor and the lower classes, and tended towards general crime and demoralization. He must, therefore, support the bill of the hon. Member for Droitwich, and, whether the Government should take the measure into its own hands or not, the country would still be much indebted to him.

Mr. *Aglionby* thought that the beer sellers should not be ridden over because they were poor. He concurred generally with Mr. Hume that a most unjust outcry had been raised against the beer sellers. Perhaps it would be better if the Government would introduce a measure for the regulation of all parties connected with the question. He would, however, at once agree to the second reading of the bill, but would most diligently watch it when it came before the Committee.

Mr. *P. Howard* objected to that clause of the bill which proposed that the prices of licences should be raised. Licensing should not be raised, except in the case of a war, or some other great emergency. He could see no necessity for the bill. He would prefer to see the present system retained under the superintendence of an effective rural police.

Mr. *R. T. Parker* read a statement which asserted, that about Manchester, many of the beer-houses were conducted as brothels, and the landlords were tried in great numbers for theft at every sessions in Salford. There were as many as 480 beer-house keepers tried in 1838. He trusted his hon. Friend would not allow the Government to take his bill out of his own hands.

Bill read a second time.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Thursday, March 21, 1839.

MINUTES.] Bills. Read a first time:—Tithe Compositions Arrears (Ireland).

Petitions presented. By the Duke of BUCKINGHAM, the Earls of SHAFTESBURY, MEATH, WINCHILSEA, and STANHOPE, the Marquess of WESTMEATH, and Lord REDESDALE, from a number of places, against the Repeal of the Corn-laws.—By the Earl of CAMPERDOWN, from Leith, and Lord FOLEY, from several places, for the Repeal of the Corn-laws.—By the Duke of BUCKINGHAM, from three places, Lord HATHERTON, from Uttoxeter, and Lord RAYLEIGH, from a place in Essex, for the Repeal of the Beer-laws.—By Lord REDESDALE, from several places in Scotland, for Church Extension.—By Lord FOLEY, from one place, for a Uniform Penny Postage.—By the Marquess of WINCHILSEA, from Maldon, and another place, against any further Grant to Maynooth College; also from a place in Yorkshire, for excluding Roman Catholics from Parliament.

GOVERNMENT OF IRELAND.] The Earl of *Roden* rose on the Order of the Day to bring forward his motion relative to the state of Ireland, and said, he could assure their Lordships that he regretted greatly that some of his noble Friends near him had not undertaken the most important subject which it now became his duty to bring under the consideration of the House; for he could sincerely assure their Lordships that nothing but a strong and imperative sense of public duty could have induced him to forego the happiness and tranquillity of his domestic circle to come into that House, year after year, to occupy their Lordships' attention with the unhappy and distracted condition of the country to which he belonged. But the state of that country rendered it incumbent on him to take that course. Sharing as he did in the opinions, and possessing the confidence, of a very large and much-respected portion of his fellow-countrymen, he felt that he should be acting in a very criminal manner indeed were he not, in this hour of deep and great distress in which his country was placed—distress which, in his lifetime, until lately, was altogether unknown—were he not to come forward and to state plainly what appeared to him to be the causes, many at least of the causes, which rendered life and property insecure in various parts of Ireland—causes of such a nature as operated to strike terror into the minds of the peaceable, and to prevent many, very many individuals in that country, from the exercise of that civil and religious liberty, which it was the duty of a good and efficient Government to provide for, under all circumstances, however difficult, and without any reference to personal or to party feeling. He would freely confess to their Lordships, that the subject which he was compelled to bring forward this night he found one of considerable difficulty—not because he had not matter, and most painful matter, to bring before their Lordships, but because he found the subject so vast, its ramifications so extensive, and its details so numerous, that they encumbered him by their complexity, and weighed him down by their importance. The great difficulty was, how to compress those details into such a space on the one hand as would not take up too much of their Lordships' time, and would, on the other, enable him to substantiate facts as a foundation for the motion with which he intended to conclude. Their Lordships would remember, that, at the commencement of the last Session of Parliament, there was a paragraph in the Speech from the Throne, in which external and "domestic" tranquillity was mentioned. Their Lordships would also recollect, that the noble Lord who seconded the Address had extended the application of that paragraph, not only to England and Scotland, but to Ireland. Their Lordships would further recollect, that he objected to the application of that paragraph with respect to Ireland, and he afterwards submitted to the House a motion on the subject. He objected to such an application of the paragraph, because he was perfectly aware that the so-called tranquillity of Ireland could be no other than the tranquillity of death itself. Why did he entertain that feeling? Because he well knew, that at the time, there was in existence and in full operation, in that country, a combination of the most dangerous and alarming kind—the effects of which had been to terminate the lives of many of those whose exemplary conduct had brought them within the vengeance and under the ban of this foul and bloody proscription. Persecution was practised on individuals the most harmless, the most innocent, of lives the most praiseworthy. He recollected, that on the occasion of his motion, the noble Marquess opposite answered his statements with that eloquence and ability which he always manifested when the noble Marquess addressed their Lordships. That speech he had since seen published—published, he believed, on authority. Therefore, he felt himself at liberty to quote from it, and to show, that not one of the facts which he had brought under their Lordships' consideration had been attempted to be denied. He should now confine himself to certain facts which had occurred since the last time he had the honour of addressing their Lordships. Those facts would form part of his case as a ground for the motion with which he meant to conclude. They were facts which tended to prove the real state of Ireland at the present moment, and to exhibit to their Lordships a picture of that country with respect to crime on the one hand, and the conspiracy and combination which now existed against the possibility of obtaining justice, if not in all, at least in the great majority of instances where serious criminal charges were made, on the other. The facts which he meant to quote were literally and truly facts; and if he were not convinced, that he could prove them to be so before a committee of their Lordships, he should not have ventured to trouble the House on the subject. He should be able to prove, that combination and crime existed to such a degree in Ireland as called for the interposition of the Legislature—as strongly demanded inquiry at the hands of their Lordships. That country was now suffering under a tyranny, was now groaning under a system of proscription, which he believed was altogether unknown in any other country in the world. He had taken his statements from different counties, in order to show that crime was not confined to one or two counties; that it was not confined to Tipperary or Westmeath, in which there had always been crime. No; he should prove, that crime, in its most frightful and repulsive forms, was extending to all the counties of Ireland. The first cases he should allude to to prove the extent of intimidation that prevailed, occurred in Tipperary; and first on the list, was the trial of the murderers of Messrs. Cooper and Weyland. It was proved on the trial, that the murderers met at public-houses and talked of the murder every Sunday from February to April. People in the neighbourhood knew of it, and laughed at them. They would not catch their horses when they fled; and women cried out, "Why don't you come in here?" During the three months that Mr. Weyland lay dying, his father received a note almost daily, to bid him not waste his money on drugs for his son, as if he recovered, they would shoot him as soon as he crossed the door. Mr. O'Keeffe was shot in the street of Thurles. At the inquest, three labourers said they saw the shot fired, and saw O'Keeffe turn towards them. Still, they could not identify the murderer. On the evening of the 16th October, a person tried to murder a man named Gleeson in the street at Thurles. There was a person looking on, but he gave no aid to the party assailed. A magistrate had written, "I never heard of any instance when any inhabitant of Thurles came forward to prevent outrage." On the 18th of September W. Brien was murdered on his way to the fair of Castle Otway. On the inquest it was proved that at the time the murder was committed, a crowd was present; but, notwithstanding no one could identify the murderer. Burke, a herdsman of Mr. Scully, Queen's Counsel, was murdered on the 6th of September, because another labourer had been displaced. On the 10th of December, Currie, a carpenter, was murdered, for giving Mr. Orde information. He would advert next to the county of Sligo. At the trial of the murderer of Allan and M'Kenzie, the carman, who drove them and saw all the parties, would not identify them, nor would any of the crowd. There were four cases of carmen travelling on different roads from Sligo, who were beaten nearly to death. One man, George Cavan, was beaten three times. Yet, though he knew the parties, he was afraid to prosecute. There were many persons, in the last and the preceding summer, found by the chaplain in the hospital at Sligo, suffering from bruises or wounds. They knew whom the parties were by whom they had been ill treated; but, from fear, they refused to inform against them. He would next turn to the county of Leitrim. A farmer, named Price, employed by Lord Clements, was beaten, and threatened if he dared to prosecute. He refused in consequence; for this tremendous system of intimidation ran through the whole country. In the county of Longford, on the estate of a noble Friend of his, Lord Lorton, whose name need only be mentioned to command respect and esteem, near Ballinamuck, no less than ten murders, or attempts to murder, were perpetrated from May, 1836, to January, 1837; and there was but one prosecution. A man by the name of Brock was murdered in a field a quarter of a mile from the village. His unfortunate wife pointed out the murderer to a party of individuals standing at the door; but, to use her own words, "they scoffed at her." Another man (Cathcart) was three times fired at before he was shot dead, in open day, by armed men. Here, also, no evidence could be obtained. No later than last Monday week, the rev. Mr. Butler received a notice that he must part with all his Protestant servants. This he refused to do, and one of his servants going into Longford last week, on his master's jaunting-car, was attacked and severely beaten. He now lay in Longford in a hopeless state. He would proceed to Roscommon. From documents sent to Mr. Drummond last spring, it appeared, that there was a general combination, night attacks, and oaths tendered. But parties would not identify the offenders. Lillie, a farmer, was driven from his farm, and was obliged to work as a labourer in the town of Boyle. As he attributed his molestation to feelings growing out of an election contest, he last year went back to his farm, supposing that those feelings no longer existed. He had not, however, been there more than a few days, when he was again attacked, and compelled to seek refuge in Boyle. Guffrey was killed in the open street in Keadre last August; but no evidence could be procured from those who were in the street at the time. He would next notice Westmeath. The police had reported to Government that it was completely organized. A magistrate wrote—"Don't mention our names. We are living here only by sufferance, and it is not safe for any gentleman to have his name brought forward." He would ask his noble Friend, the Lord-lieutenant of the county, whether this was an overstatement? He did not wish to overstate any thing. He would rather understate than overstate; but, in fact, it was next to impossible to overstate the frightful situation of Ireland. Mr. Hinds, of Mitchell's-town, bought a property in May, 1836. This was the case of a gentleman of fortune, who was anxious to vest his money in the purchase of land in Ireland. The others were the cases of people in humble circumstances. How was this gentleman treated? Why, eight attacks were made on his property, or on his servants. At last a party of police was stationed by Government in his yard. Again, the care-taker of Mr. Ennis, Queen's Counsel, was savagely murdered. Here, also, no evidence could be obtained. Mr. Mears bought a lease of sixty-seven acres of land from Major Elrington, and meant to have renewed some others. Priest Coghlan denounced Major Elrington's agent, Mr. Brabazon, who was murdered on the 5th of December, in the open road. A crowd was near at the time, but no evidence could be obtained as to the identity of the murderers. A Scotch gentleman laid out a large sum of money on a property. He warned off a leader of a Riband gang, who was cutting his turf: He then received a threatening notice. Government offered 30*l.* reward for the discovery of the offender, and an attack on his farm was the consequence. He had received a letter the other day from the county of Westmeath, stating that an outrage had been committed on Friday last, the day on which the commission was opened at Mullingar, just at eleven o'clock, when the chief constable had ordered the police to be in attendance at the court. In this outrage one man was shot, and another sadly beaten. In Waterford Mr. Keefe, of Mountain-castle, was fired at and killed, in April, as he was going to mass. Crowds saw it, but none stopped the aggressor. By a late trial it was proved that there was a general organization in Louth. In June last, James Anderson, steward of the rev. Mr. Wright, was beaten to death. A man who was with him, although he saw it, would not give evidence. The magistrates of Monaghan had applied for an increase of constabulary force. Mr. Gillespie, a publican and a Roman Catholic, three miles from Monaghan, spoke disparagingly of a Riband leader. The gang came to his house in September last and beat him. Government offered a reward of 30*l*; and on the 4th of December they returned and stabbed him and took away his arms. Such cases were rare in Carlow formerly, now the calendar contained about seventy cases generally. In Clare a man named M'Namara and another, were indicted for murder at the last assizes, but intimidation prevented the necessary evidence from being given, although the widow of the murdered man was among the witnesses. Mr. Baron Richards, who presided in the court, observed that it afforded a most lamentable view of the state of the country, when such murders were committed, and none could be found to come forward for the purpose of bringing the offenders to justice. He was afraid of wearying the House in going through these details, but he felt the necessity of stating them, as the grounds of the motion with which he intended to conclude. In Limerick there had settled on the mountains of Latera sixteen Protestant families, who were visited by a clergyman, Mr. Stoddart. They were continually attacked by their neighbours, and they were forced to warn the clergyman, whom they paid themselves, to desist from coming, and since that the persecution they were exposed to was so great that ten out of the sixteen had left the place. He would mention another case—that of Thomas Brazil, who had lands six miles from Limerick town. In 1836 he refused to memorialize Government in favour of two men who he believed had murdered his tenant: he became unpopular; his tenants would not pay, and he ejected them; then no one would cut corn; none dared to occupy houses; and armed bodies marched in open day across the lands. He applied to Government in October for police, and Mr. Drummond stated that "too few were employed in that neighbourhood in proportion to the duties to be performed." The cases which he had now brought forward he had taken from twelve counties; but he had not taken King's county; he left that to his noble Friend who had taken so active a part in the late lamentable transaction in that county—a part which was honourable to himself and most useful to the country to which he belonged. As one who was most anxious for the welfare of Ireland, he must say, that the noble Earl's conduct with respect to those transactions had procured for him the approbation and respect of all good and loyal subjects. The communications which had just been read to the House were every one derived from magistrates in many parts of Ireland; but if those magistrates were spoken of publicly by name, they would every one of them immediately be marked men, the objects of assassination and destruction. There was one singular statement furnished by the Government authorities themselves in proof of this: there were four magistrates—two in Tipperary, and two in Westmeath who had received notice from the police to be watchful at what hours they went out, for they were marked men. He could relate many other such circumstances; but he was anxious to leave it to his noble friend, who lived in another part of the country where outrages had taken place, to speak of them. It was his own happy lot to live in a part of the country where these outrages were not so much known—he would say, not known. There the authorities had to deal with a peasantry to whose character he was anxious to bear testimony. A more industrious or peaceable peasantry could not exist anywhere, except in instances where the Riband conspiracy made its approach, as it had done in some districts, and carried with it those murderous principles which were the foundation of the system. But he was sorry to say, that it was the object of demagogues in different parts of the country to destroy the peace and the religion of that peasantry. He was afraid that there was but a small spot in all Ireland where some of the outrages which he had described had not taken place. But before he sat down he should move for the appointment of a Select Committee to inquire into the state of the country, and, if possible, to arrest the arm of the assassin, and to trace the progress of that conspiracy to which he should by and by advert more at length, as another ground for his motion. The arguments which he would use to justify his motion for the Select Committee were, first of all, the acknowledged state of crime in Ireland, which no one could deny; and he would next ask the consent of their Lordships to his motion, because of that panic, which even the noble Lord opposite admitted to exist, and which was driving the people from their homes, in order that they might provide elsewhere for themselves and families, that security which the law and which the authorities were unable to give them. Last year 112 deaths by violence had taken place in Ireland. He believed, indeed, that there were many more, but that was the number which he had ascertained without the assistance of the local authorities, who, he thought, would be able to swell the account very much. But there was another argument: above all, he hoped their Lordships would agree to the motion for a Committee as an act of justice to the noble Marquess, on whose Government rested so much responsibility for those tears of sorrow and streams of blood that had marked the career of his viceregal authority. He was speaking of the noble Marquess only in his capacity as a public officer, and as a public man he had a perfect right to deal with him in that House, and to arraign these proceedings under his Government of Ireland which had been, he thought, so detrimental to the public safety. He knew that the noble Lord would tell the House that crime had always existed in Ireland, and it could not be denied, that unhappily for many years past that country had been stained by crime. But what he said was this, that never had crime been suffered to go on as under the Government of the noble Marquess, whose predecessors, when they met with crime, grappled with it and subdued it. That he had always acknowledged, notwithstanding any difference of opinion he might have had with former Governments with regard to other departments of their policy. The noble Baron (Fortescue), who talked of consulting the late Lord-lieutenants of Ireland now he was about to undertake the same duties, had resolved, he hoped, to consult Lord Anglesey; for under the advice of that Nobleman he would be more likely to administer the Government in a manner satisfactory, at least, to the loyal people of Ireland. In which, from his heart, he trusted the noble Baron would succeed, and in which he would be most happy to render every assistance in his power. Should the noble Baron consult Lord Anglesey, he would be likely to receive advice which would enable him to administer the law, not to change it, and to remove all cause for the complaint which was now made, that the law had not been duly administered. He was sure, that the noble Marquess had acted from a conscientious feeling of what was right; but he begged to say to the noble Marquess—and it was an important fact, that he was going to state—that, whatever might be his opinion of the benefits of the course which the noble Marquess had pursued, however loud might have been those shouts of applause which he had received in his popular tour through Ireland from a multitude ordered to attend, he believed, for that purpose by the priests, or sent by the demagogues—however respectable the noble Marquess might deem the support which he had received, yet the astounding fact remained undisputed, that at the present moment animosities in Ireland were more prevalent, religious distinctions more marked, the social bonds more extensively broken, the Protestant faith more assailed, and life and property less secure, than in any former period since the passing of the legislative act of union. That he should be able to prove, if their Lordships would grant him a committee. The noble Marquess the other night seemed surprised when he stated, that the course which he had pursued of opening the prisons in many parts of Ireland, and clearing the gaols, had produced very great alarm and disgust in the minds of many of the most peaceable and loyal subjects of her Majesty, not of one grade or of another grade, but of all grades. He had not made that statement without due consideration, and he now repeated it. He would read the statement of a fact which would prove, that he had not spoken too strongly. In Autumn last, a Roman Catholic named Gubben, in consequence of a political quarrel with a Protestant, pursued him, followed by a mob, into the house of a man named Barnett, in which he had taken refuge. Gubben and his followers insisted on his being given up to them, as they were determined to beat him for being an Orangeman. This Barnett refused to do, when they commenced an outrageous assault upon his house, which they nearly demolished, destroying and plundering almost every article it contained. For this offence Gubben was tried at the quarter sessions in October last, and Mr. Fogarty, then assistant-barrister for the county of Antrim, after hearing the case, sentenced him to six months' confinement, expressing at the same time, his regret, that he could not legally sentence him to transportation. He was committed to the borough gaol on the 27th of October. A memorial was immediately got up by his friends, and within three weeks, viz. on the 15th of November, an order arrived from the Lord-lieutenant for his unconditional discharge. And now mark the effect. His first proceeding was to re-assemble his mob, and return to the house of Barnett, when he tauntingly called on him to come out and see him again at liberty, and hoped he would now see the influence enjoyed by his friends at Belfast. Was it possible to expect peace in Ireland while such a system existed? He was not surprised, that the noble Marquess had refused to lay certain memorials before their Lordships the other night. Had they been produced, their Lordships would have known what sort of persons those were who made application for the liberation of prisoners. By a return furnished to the House of Commons, dated from February, 1837, to May, 1838, it appeared that within those two years no less than 1,173 convicted prisoners had been discharged. Of that number thirty-seven had been condemned to death, thirty-three sentenced to transportation for life, and sixty-three to seven years. In the noble Marquess's popularity tour, so it was called in Ireland—in his popularity tour taken in the month of August, 1836, there were discharged 284 prisoners, 110 of whom were discharged by verbal order. That was during the lifetime of his late Majesty. Now, suppose his late Majesty had taken a tour of the same kind, and had visited Chelmsford, Hertford, and York, and had discharged from Chelmsford thirty prisoners, as the noble Marquess did at Leitrim; twenty-four from Hertford, as the noble Marquess did at Sligo; and seventy-two at York, as the noble Marquess did at Tipperary, would such a proceeding have excited no attention? It was true, that the King could do no wrong; but would not the magistrates have remonstrated with the Government on the effects of such a proceeding? Such conduct, as it had been well described, would make mercy feared instead of justice. There were other circumstances connected with this discharge of prisoners to which he would not further allude, but which he trusted some learned Lord would take up, as he himself was unable to discuss the legal part of the question. The next subject to which he was anxious to call their Lordships' attention was the existence of an association which he was sure was known to their Lordships by the mischief of which it had been productive. It was the association known by the name of the Precursor Society, and which had been established and carried on for purposes of mischief by a learned Gentleman who was the stay and support of the present Government, and of whom the noble Viscount opposite had said, that he had the most perfect confidence in her Majesty's Government. Of this society the learned Gentleman was the chief; but though it had been called into existence by his influence, it was supported and upheld by the Roman Catholic priests. The noble Marquess opposite might tell him, that he had nothing to do with this association; but his answer to that was, that in not using the power with which he had been intrusted as governor of Ireland, to put down that society, the noble Marquess became a participator in all its proceedings. He said so the more particularly, because he remembered, that the Government had suppressed the Orange Society—a society which was calculated to promote the welfare of the country, because that body had for its object purposes which were perfectly legal, and was established to uphold the laws of the country, and to preserve the integrity of the empire. Such were the objects of the Orange Society, whereas the first object of the Precursor Association, as had been acknowledged, was the destruction of the Protestant Church in Ireland by the annihilation of tithes, and, if that object could not be obtained, then its second object was a Repeal of the Union. Now, he would tell the noble Marquess if he again affirmed, that he did not belong to the Precursor Society, that so long as the Government of which the noble Marquess was a member did not attempt to put down that association, so long were the Government implicated in its transactions, and responsible for its proceedings: *Qui facit per alium, facit per se.* He considered he was bound to bring this association under the notice of their Lordships; but in regard to its objects, he was unwilling to rest his statements upon his own testimony, and he should, therefore, with their Lordships' permission, read a few extracts from the testimonies of others. The first extract he should read was from a letter written by the learned gentleman who had established this body.

> "Indeed, I pity the Irishman who supposes there is any hope for his country, save in the repeal. I request an adjournment for a fortnight of the Precursor Society—that is, from Monday the 11th, to Monday the 25th. On the latter day, I will, please God, attend, and remain in Dublin, organizing the popular party for a fortnight. I will, in the first week after the recess, bring in the subject of an equalisation of the Parliamentary franchise between England and Ireland, and again divide the House on that question. I will try the same measure in substance, but in a different form, so as to meet Parliamentary usages, in the month of May. Being defeated in these attempts, I will then submit to the Precursor Society the necessity of either dissolving, or making way for the National Association for the Repeal of the Union. This last plan must be carefully digested, in order to make us as many friends and as few enemies as possible. I mean, of course, in Ireland; but if I stand alone, I will then commence the repeal agitation, and never abandon it, save in success, or in my grave. It is my conscientious conviction that I owe it as a duty to Ireland, and to that God who will judge my actions and motives at his judgment seat, to struggle for the restoration of the Irish Parliament, and to commence that struggle the moment the present Session of Parliament has passed away without producing any substantial benefit to our unhappy country. In the meantime, let us work as Precursors—augment by all legitimate means the number of Precursors. Let the Irish people show no apathy, no indifference. Send in as many petitions as possible; in short, agitate during the session for measures of equalisation and identification. In future, our agitation shall be for repeal."

He would read another extract from the same learned gentleman's speech at Limerick, in November, 1838. The learned gentleman commenced:

> "Agitate, agitate, agitate—the only wise words spoken by the Marquess of Anglesey the whole time he was in Ireland. That was his advice, and it is necessary we should take it. My Precursor plan is for universal organisation. The man who will not be a Precursor we will not abuse or ill use, but we can make him uncomfortable, for no man will speak to him. If I had a petition signed by 500,000 fighting men, beginning at the age of fourteen and ending at sixty-five, it would be attended to. A few words would do—'We her Majesty's dutiful subjects, whose names are subscribed hereto, being 500,000 fighting men, respectfully pray, beseech, and implore upon the knees of our hearts, as beggars would for alms, to have justice done to us, and ending with the words, 'And your petitioners will ever pray.' A petition of that kind would be likely to be attended to, and no other, I repeat, will be listened to."

Now, the only question he would ask the noble Marquess opposite was, whether any such petitions had been presented to her Majesty; and if they had, then he should like to be informed whether they had been favourably received. But this association was, as he had stated, not supported merely by the learned gentleman, for it was supported and upheld by the Roman Catholic priests at large. He now came, therefore, to the speech of a Roman Catholic priest, which had been delivered at a dinner, given to the learned Gentleman, the Member for Dublin, in the town of Thurles. He was glad to see the noble Lord opposite (Lord Lismore) in his place, as the noble Lord had been in the chair at the dinner to which he alluded, and would, therefore, be able to say whether the statement he had to make to their Lordships was correct or not. At that dinner, a priest of the name of Laffan, after complimenting the noble chairman, said:

"You well remember when we beat the descendants of the Cromwellians by a majority of 1,036. If the same course is followed we shall free ourselves for ever from the Cromwellian grasp. I am happy to say that the Precursor agitation is getting on well here. In my own parish there are already 1,000 shillings paid down. In a neighbouring parish, there are 1,400 Precursors, in another 700, and it delights me to add, before January, universal Tipperary will be Precursors. Let Ireland follow that example, and it will soon enable us to put an end to the bloody tithes. We should never cease till tithes are totally and entirely abolished both in name and nature. The only good done by the bill, and for which we may thank our guest, is, that the arrears are wiped off; but I repeat, that alone does not, will not, satisfy us."

The Catholic priest then concluded with a tissue of vulgar abuse. He would not allude more to this dinner, and he had only stated so much which he believed to be true, in order to show how the Roman Catholic priesthood were engaged, and what their real objects were. He found his statements fully confirmed by the testimony of a Roman Catholic barrister, a man of great celebrity, who said that it was manifestly true that the line of conduct pursued by the Roman Catholic priests was one tending directly to the destruction of the Established Church. He alluded to Mr. O'Driscoll, who in a speech delivered at Youghall, in September, 1836, had said:

"As a Roman Catholic I may be allowed to assure you of the nature of those dangers. I tell you not to be deceived in the present day, for I fearlessly assert that the end, aim, and object of the Roman Catholic clergy is to subvert your Church of England altogether, and to annihilate it, root and branch from the land."

Such were the opinions of Mr. O'Driscoll as regarded the views of the Roman Catholic clergy, and he believed they were fully borne out by the facts. In reference to this subject, he held in his hand a paper which was an extract from a pamphlet lately written by a very eminent individual, and to which he wished to call the attention of their Lordships. The title of the pamphlet was "The Elements of Civil Government," and the work professed to be written by a "British Jurist," and had been published in Dublin, in 1838. In reference to the Precursor Society and to the learned gentleman who had established it, the "British Jurist," spoke as follows:

"One obvious and undeniable feature characterises the whole, and that is, that they professedly aim at, as their main object, a separation of the two islands, constituting, as they now do, one state. Declarations of the most public kind, in and out of Parliament, have been made by this agitator, a thousand times repeated, that the ultimate end of his labour, as 'the representative of all Ireland,' is a repeal of the union and the restoration to Ireland, of an independent domestic legislature, and that the subordinate measure on which he has successfully excited and inflamed the Irish populace, as well as a great portion of the middle orders, namely, the abolition of the legal provision of the Irish Church tithes, and the reduction or extinction of the Church itself as a national Establishment, the extension of the representative franchise, universal suffrage, secret voting, a subversion of the hereditary independent peerage as a branch of the Legislature, and the degradation of the House of Peers to a representative body, are all but subordinate measures, pursued as means to obtain that 'great and indispensable good'—the one thing needful—separation of Ireland from the present legislative union with England; and that if he waves for a season the express pursuit of this essential good, it is but to await the result of an experiment, of which he avows his conviction that it must fail, namely, obtaining from a united Legislature those particular objects, which he calls 'justice to Ireland,' and this through the influence of his sole argument—the fear of 7,000,000 of a Popish population. Now, let those who have the government of this empire in their hands well consider, whether it be consistent with their duty, or with the ultimate safety of the kingdom over whose destinies they preside, to permit this object to be thus avowed, or thus pursued. Is it, or is it not, treasonable thus to endeavour, through the medium of the physical force of the country, and the intimidation of its power, to overthrow the existing fundamental law of the realm? Shall a man be hanged as a traitor if he be guilty of procuring by force or terror, the enactment or repeal of a single law? And shall the safety of the whole empire be left in jeopardy for years until the treason of another individual effects, in the long run, its own object, by subverting forcibly, or obtaining by fraud, a change of the whole system of laws by which the state is now governed, and until a government by the mob, and a religion from Rome shall supersede the government which we have now a right to enjoy—namely, one founded on law and on principles of rational policy, and a religion which is part of the British state, one which we have hitherto reckoned it as our peculiar pride that we have established as part of our constitution, and sealed with the best blood of our ancestors? If this, then, be treason, is not the time yet come when its progress shall be arrested? Must we wait, defenceless, the approach of the rebel horde—the 7,000,000, or fly on their approach? Must we patiently and passively expect the murdering host, which have spread pillage, and arson, and massacre, over the land, and rest satisfied and comforted with the consolatory declaration of a chief governor, who assures us that 'Ireland is tranquil.' How long, may we ask, is the sword of justice to be suspended? How long, till the 'power' of the state and the force of the law shall unite to save us from the forlorn, the destitute condition of the almost betrayed and deserted Canadas? We may, perhaps, console ourselves that there is not yet a Papineau to marshal and lead a rebel force—none to take the field, and hazard his person for his principles, like the bolder rebel in Canada; but may not some more fearless aspirant, some less discreet and cautious traitor than we now suffer from—be found to venture a worthless life under the secret auspices of the prime leader? If so, it may then concern Britain herself even though the existing minority of the Irish people, the loyal and Protestant, were to fall disregarded—predestined victims of the folly or crimes of Government—it may, I say, then behove Britain herself to consider whether she has nothing to dread from the further progress of movement."

The pamphlet from which he had taken that extract was one of great ability; its author, although he only signed himself a "British Jurist," he knew to be a very clever man, and he would beg to recommend the pamphlet to the perusal of their Lordships, as it was full of important information in regard to the state and prosperity of Ireland. The next subject to which he was anxious to call their Lordships' attention as a ground for the committee he intended to move for, he had before alluded to. The subject was, that of a conspiracy in Ireland—a conspiracy systematic, organized, and secret, and which was directed against the life and property of all who would not join it and support the treasonable objects which its members had in view. From that conspiracy the poor farmers were the greatest sufferers, for, however anxious they might be for security, peace, and quiet, yet if they refused to join this conspiracy, or to obey the dictates of its members, they were visited at night, beaten, maltreated, and exposed to the greatest cruelties. The object and ultimate aim of the Riband conspiracy was exactly the same as those of the Precursor Association—namely, separation from England, in which was involved the annihilation of the Protestant faith. Such, he believed, were the chief objects of both bodies. He had stated before, that the Government were acquainted with the existence of that conspiracy from the investigations of its own officers, and he well remembered that when he made that statement, the noble Marquess opposite had said that he knew nothing of such a conspiracy, and if he recollected right, the noble Marquess also added, that he did not believe such a conspiracy existed. It, therefore, was incumbent upon him to prove to their Lordships the existence of a conspiracy in order to lay an additional ground for the Committee which he should conclude by moving for. The first statement he should make as to the existence of this conspiracy was from the speech of Judge Burton, in discharging the jury at the close of the commission which had been held in the county of Tipperary. That learned judge told the jury that the cases of crime which had come before them were of a most aggravated and atrocious character; that out of thirteen cases of murder three had been cases of premeditated assassination, arising out of conspiracy; and he added, that he could imagine nothing more horrible than systematic and premeditated assassination, and he was sure that what they had heard and witnessed must have filled their minds, as it would fill the minds of every right-thinking individual, with horror, the more particularly as it was found almost impossible to obtain evidence to convict the guilty. The conspirators also were encouraged by the disposition of the peasantry to screen the criminals from punishment. The next was the testimony of the Lord Chief Justice of the Queen's Bench, relative to the case of Mr. O'Keeffe; and then came the case of Lord Norbury, into which he would not then enter, as his noble Friend near him would call their Lordships' attention to it. Here was a noble Lord shot while walking in his park in open day, in a populous neighbourhood, and yet the assassins had escaped. And although upwards of 4,000*l.* and an annuity of 100*l.* had been offered for the detection of the murderer, he believed not a syllable of evidence had yet been elicited. But he had before him something still stronger to prove the existence of conspiracies, namely, the Riband oath. The following statement was made upon the affidavit of a person who had been a Ribandman, and was sworn to on the 9th of February, 1839. —He stated—

> "That he is a member of the Riband Society, that it consists of county delegates, parish delegates, treasurer, body-master, committee-men, and common members; states how these are chosen, that the county delegates meet quarterly in large towns for the purpose of giving renewals of pass-words, signs, warrants, &c.; at the parish meetings, &c., members are admitted and sworn. The oath, amongst other things, is, that the member shall keep secret all he may see or hear, be loyal and true to each brother, fight for each other to death (especially against Protestants or heretics, or any man who may oppose his religion), not to discover or give any information against any brother, and to hold himself ready to rise in defence of his religion when called upon: that at their meetings orders are issued by the committee for the beating, carding, or other punishment of any person who may have rendered himself obnoxious in any way,—such as by taking land from which any member has been ejected, voting at an election against the candidate the society favours, giving evidence, &c.; and for the purposes of punishment, people from a different neighbourhood are appointed, in order that they may not be known, and a person (of the neighbourhood) to point out their victim. The (pass) warrant is written with contractions, so that none but the initiated can read it, and the pass-words are changed quarterly. He states the names, and addresses, and offices of various persons well known."

Now, that came from a person he would not name, but he held in his hand a similar statement, which he had no objection to communicate to any noble Lord, and which was fuller in its details, and had been forwarded to Government. Now, this same system had been traced to Leitrim and Cavan, and persons in the employment of Government had also discovered traces of it in Wicklow. During last winter in the gaol of Mullingar, proofs ad been obtained of the existence of the same system in that neighbourhood, and in Carlow it had been traced by the exertions of three of the magistrates of that county. In the county of Sligo it appeared from the information of two individuals who were Ribandmen, that an attack on the property of a gentleman of the name of Sims had been organized by the Riband Society, and he begged to state that at the last sessions at Drogheda several prisoners were found to be in possession of the Riband oath, and their trial was in consequence remanded to another session. He would now read to their Lordships a document relating to the attack made on the property of Mr. Sims, which would show to what a tremendous extent this Riband conspiracy was carried. The noble Lord read a paper setting forth that "Mr. Sims, a Scotch flour merchant, took a mill in Sligo; that some dispute arose between him and two gentlemen of the name of Kelly, who had been the original proprietors of the mill. It was then signified in the county that no one must deal with Mr. Sims; and the consequence was, that his large flour mill, which was previously in full operation, was reduced to inaction. Mr. Sims was on the eve of being ruined by the people deserting his mill, when he was obliged to agree to the terms of the Messrs. Kelly, who required a sum of money from him; and from that moment all opposition to him ceased, and the priest was active in bringing persons to the mill." It was not his wish to insinuate any charge against the Messrs. Kelly, but nevertheless the transaction he had described was of an extraordinary character; and those gentlemen of the name of Kelly were afterwards received by the noble Marquess opposite, and had been, he was informed, made justices of the peace. He repeated, he made no charge against any one, but he maintained that he had grounds for saying that an organized Riband conspiracy existed in many of the counties of Ireland. The last subject with which he should trouble the House was more important than any he had yet touched upon, and called imperatively for their Lordships' interference. It referred, not to the spirit of resistance originating in tithe disputes, or in any political controversy, but to the conduct of the Roman Catholic priesthood, first of all in endeavouring to impede the Protestants in the exercise of their religious duties; and in the next place, it referred to the conduct of her Majesty's Ministers, who, when the facts were represented to them, took no measures for insuring civil and religious liberty to these aggrieved Protestants. He was sure that many of their Lordships would agree with him in thinking that much of the misery and agitation of which they had to complain in Ireland arose from the violence of the Roman Catholic priesthood; and he would fearlessly assert that many of his poor Roman Catholic brethren in a humble sphere of life might be pointed to as examples of a good peasantry, were it not for the lessons they received from those who ought to teach them better things. He did not wish to make this statement merely on his own authority, for he knew that the charge of being a great bigot was sometimes thrown out against him, yet he would not yield to any individual in anxiety for the welfare and happiness of his Roman Catholic as well as Protestant fellow-countrymen. In corroboration of what he had just stated, he would adduce the authority of Baron Richards. The following was an extract from the charge delivered by Baron Richards at Castlebar, March, 1838:—

"As a friend of humanity, and particularly as a friend to the people of this country, I must deeply regret such a state of things. I cannot but grieve over the depraved character of a people who can be guilty of the many atrocious cases that have come before me at these assizes, and several of those homicides have occurred as the parties were returning from the mass-house. I must here say, that I cannot but think the minds of the people of this country are as open to instruction as those of any other; and if proper and due precepts were impressed upon them, they could be restrained from the violence and bloodshed which so greatly disgrace this country. I am certain the people could be humanized, and without anything like reproach, I do say, that a heavy responsibility rests on those who met these people in the house of God—I mean the spiritual instructors of the people, whose duty it is to keep them from violence and murder, and I think that could be done by proper exertion and persuasion. Many of the reverend Gentlemen I allude to are excellent men, and for them I have a high respect, but in the discharge of my duty I must say, that I conceive the people of this country are as susceptible of receiving benefits from the instruction their pastors should bestow as the people of any other. It is by the efforts of their clergymen more than by law the people can be humanized and rendered amenable to the voice of justice and peace. Feeling that such is the case, it strikes me with amazement that the people should still exhibit such savage conduct. Very many cases of murder that have come before me were committed on the return of those concerned from the house of God, and that murderous habit I cannot reconcile with the moral and religious instruction which ought to be impressed on the people."

Such was the language of Baron Richards —a gentleman whose testimony would not be questioned by the noble Lords opposite, for he was a judge lately appointed by her Majesty's present Government. The next evidence he was anxious to produce in corroboration of his statements was that of a respectable gentleman, a Roman Catholic by birth, brother of a respectable Roman Catholic priest in Dublin. This gentleman, Dr. Meyler, had written an interesting pamphlet on the state of Ireland, which he recommended to their Lordships' attention, and from which he would take the liberty of reading, in the mean time, the following extract:—

"The Protestants have no safety but in coalition, and if they coalesce in a liberal spirit of amity towards their Roman Catholic countrymen, they will be met more than half way by all the respectable portion of that community, who, whatever religious opinions they may profess, are equally adverse, as are the Protestants, to mob and priestly dominion."

Again, speaking of the priests, Dr. Meyler says,

"In consequence of the hatred with which they inspire the people against the Protestants, they are the chief instruments in preventing tranquillity; the minds of the peasantry cannot settle down in quiet, in consequence of the state of excitement in which they keep them. They dread the influence of friendly intercourse with their Protestant landlords, and they keep them in an attitude of constant hostility on that account, putting themselves forward to the peasantry as the only authority they should obey, and the only guides they should follow. There can be no doubt but there is organized in Ireland, and that it is in active operation, also, a secret, powerful, and dread tribunal, which has assumed to itself the government of the land, and that its members take upon themselves to regulate the affairs of the country, and exercise a power far more formidable than that of the law. They denounce from the altar, they excite the people to lawlessness, and exercise over them an unlimited despotism by the agency of their superstition; they direct all things, as if invested with unlimited authority; they dictate to the rulers of the land, and send Members to Parliament, who must, in return, obey their dictates; they watch over even the private conduct of Protestants, and know all their proceedings and domestic secrets by the agency of the confessional; the Protestants court them from fear, and contribute to their exactions. There can be no security for the country, nor no hope for its civilization and prosperity, till this order be put down—*Delenda est Carthago.* Every effort should, therefore, be made to repress the spread of sedition by the strong arm of the law, and even moral influence should be employed to wean the people from the doctrines of the priest, and to free them from the dark and degrading bondage of their yoke."

In connexion with this part of the subject he was anxious to bring under consideration the state of persecution endured by certain Protestants in the west of Ireland, merely on account of their religion:—

"A severe famine with which the western coast of Ireland was visited in 1831, led to the establishment of the Protestant colony at Achill. A minister of the establishment, Mr. Nangle, having acquired a knowledge of the Irish language, and having directed his mind particularly to the missionary operations of the United Brethren among the Greenlanders and other barbarous people, was led by his anxiety to benefit his fellow-creatures, to visit them in this time of their suffering and distress. He found on his arrival the most extreme destitution and ignorance prevailing; then it was that the plan of his mission, designed to further the temporal welfare of the natives in subserviency to their higher interests, was first conceived. He received encouragement from the chief proprietor of the island, who gave them a lease of 130 acres on the north-west part of the island. It was a wild tract of moor, overrun with heath, in order to reclaim which, and render it productive, houses were to be built in the midst of this wilderness, without any means of access or communication with a civilized country but by the sea. The works which were necessary were to be accomplished by the inhabitants, destitute of skill, or with the advantage of suitable implements. However, a steward was hired, the farm was enclosed, and two families took up their abode there in 1833. The reverend Mr. Nangle removed there with his family in 1834, and has since built a church. A congregation has been formed, in part of converts from the church of Rome, and of those who always belonged to the Protestant Church. They are occupied in their lawful calling of improving their farms; but the religion they profess has exposed them to the violence and persecution of Dr. M'Hale and his priests."

He did not wish their Lordships to believe this story merely on his assertion; and therefore would read depositions taken on oath, before their Lordships' Committee, which supplied complete proof of his statement. The following was the evidence of the witness Rolph:—

"You went to the chapel where the people were?—Yes.

"Did you see Dr. M'Hale in the chapel?—I did.

"Did you see Mr. Conolly in the chapel?—I did.

"Did you see the other priests of the island in the chapel?—I believe he had a curate; I think he was there.

"Did you hear Mr. Conolly preach or say anything in the chapel concerning the Protestant religion?—I did.

"What did he say?—For one thing, he said, that the Protestant religion began in hell, and that it would end in hell.

"Did he say anything about the salvation of Protestants?—No. What he was saying was, that that religion had no foundation; that it was a new religion from the time of Luther; that it had begun in hell, and would end in hell.

"Did he say anything about the Protestant settlement?—He did. He was blaming the people for going to work there, and represented them as one going before the Devil, and the Devil having two half-crowns on his two horns, and that the man who went to work with them was like the man who would take the half-crowns from the Devil's horns, and fall down and worship them or thank him.

"Did he forbid persons to sell to the Protestant settlement?—Yes, he did. He told them not to have any communication with them, not to buy or sell, or even speak a word to them.

"Did M'Hale say anything when this sermon was over?—He got up, and seemed to me to confirm this.

Thomas M'Nulty's evidence was as follows:—

"Were you a Roman Catholic when you came to Achill?—I was.

"Were you ever in the chapel of Duncanelly, in Achill?—Yes.

"Who was the priest that officiated when you went there?—Mr. Conolly.

"Do you recollect any advice he gave the people at that time?—Yes.

"Was it in his sermon?—Yes.

"What did he say?—He gave orders to his congregation, that any person, being a Protestant or reader from the settlement, who would come to them in the field where they were at work, whatever they should have in their hand, if it was a spade, to strike them with it; and he likewise told them, if it was a pitchfork they had in their hands, to stick them."

Mr. Dombrain, another witness, the Inspector of the Coast Guard, deposed as follows:—

"You inspected the Coast Guard, that being your object in going to Achill?—Yes, I did.

"Did anything remarkable come to your knowledge?—Yes; it had been intimated to me that some very strong language had been used by the priest from the altar, either on the previous Sunday or the Sunday before that, in the presence of some of the Coast Guard men.

"Did you call those men?—I did. After the inspection was over, I called the men forward, and before entering into the particulars, I told them, that if anything had occurred between them and their priest connected with their religion, or anything of a spiritual character, I did not wish to hear it; but if anything had happened that was likely to compromise the character of the service, or its efficiency or discipline, or anything likely to lead to a breach of the peace, which I had been given to understand the words used were likely to do, then I thought they were bound to come forward and state it.

"How many men were there that were so called?—Two.

"Were they Roman Catholics?—They were.

"What were their names?—Kelly and Donovan.

"Who had given you this information?—Mr. Reynolds.

"Did they state anything to you?—Yes; they stated, that the priest had been speaking from the altar about the Protestant colony, and that he had desired the congregation generally to hoot and hiss at them wherever they met them, for that he would not be satisfied till he had driven them out of the sland."

Mr. Reynolds, the chief officer of the coast guard, swore that the priest Conolly had declared, in his chapel, that he would banish Mr. Nangle or any man who should take their part, and it was his intention to drive the Protestants out of the island. He was not surprised at this violence on the part of the Roman Catholic priesthood, because, though there were, of course, exceptions, the greater part of the Roman Catholic clergy were known for their hostility to the Protestants; but what he was surprised at was, that after the danger incurred by these Protestants had been represented to the Ministers, they should have allowed months to pass away without taking means to provide against that danger. After the witnesses whose testimony he had quoted were examined, Mr. Nangle returned to Achill, where the persecution against the Protestants continued and increased, when an account of the examination of the witnesses arrived there. On the 30th of October last Mr. Nangle wrote a letter to Lord J. Russell, from which the following was an extract;—

"We receive no tithe; we and the whole of our missionary apparatus are supported by the voluntary contributions of Christians disinterestedly attached to the principles of our church, as laid down in her Articles. Our principles have been misrepresented, our motives vilified, our characters calumniated, our property invaded, our safety threatened, our persons injured. We are at this moment, my Lord, while I write, enduring the rigours of a Papal interdict; our neighbours have been forbidden to buy or sell with us, to speak to us, or to exchange any of the charities or courtesies of social life, under pain of the heaviest weight of Papal malediction: One of our congregation has been providentially preserved from a murderous blow aimed at him by an unknown assassin; another, the father of a numerous family depending for support on his industry, was assaulted in broad daylight on the highway, and sent home bleeding to his family, and wounded in such a manner, that a medical man, who has been consulted, cannot speak confidently of his recovery. Dr. M'Hale himself visited this island, to give a more furious impulse to the machinery of persecution which his priests organized, and whose movements they regulate. Yet our converts remain firm, and are more steadfast to their profession, in consequence of the antichristian conduct of the priests, and a growing murmur has arisen amongst the more respectable and enlightened portion of our Roman Catholic countrymen in this island."

He then wrote a letter to Lord Morpeth, the Chief Secretary for Ireland, on the 30th of October, complaining of the difficulties, the persecutions, and trials, which this unfortunate colony had suffered; and submitting to the Lord-lieutenant the necessity of having petty sessions established in the island of Achill. Not having received an answer to this letter, he again wrote to Lord Morpeth on the 3rd of November, praying for a reply to his former letter, and imploring Government to consider the unhappy situation in which this colony was placed. This letter was written on the 3rd of November; on the 5th of February, he came to attend to his duties in Parliament, and being informed of the circumstances, and that no answer had been received to either letter, he moved on the 7th of February for the production of all correspondence between Mr. Nangle and the Government on the subject. This was furnished on the 25th of the same month, with the addition of a letter dated the 21st of February sent by the Government in answer to the two letters of Mr. Nangle to which he had before referred; and he believed that if he had not called their Lordships attention to the subject, that answer would not have been sent at all. Was not this, he would ask, a flippant manner, to say nothing worse, of carrying on the Government of a country, and of attending to the distresses of a loyal people? But what had taken place in the mean time between the 30th of November and the date of the answer to that letter? Why, Mr. Reynolds, one of the witnesses whose evidence he had quoted, was murdered in Achill. He would say, that the Government was highly reprehensible, if they had it in their power, not to have sent earlier answers to letters complaining of the sufferings of a loyal Protestant people. The answer dated the 21st of February, to which he had alluded, was to the following effect—that with reference to Mr. Nangle's letter of the 30th of November, not that of the 30th of October, he was directed to say that there could be no immediate change in the arrangement of the petty sessions, but that the subject should receive the consideration of Government, as it appeared desirable that petty sessions should be established in Achill, and as they were anxious to secure a speedy administration of justice in Ireland. This might be true but he would ask, what would be the effect such a letter would produce in Ireland, when the enemies of this persecuted colony of Achill found that no notice was taken of their proceedings by those who ought to have been its protectors? He felt that such a state of things was calculated to demand the most serious attention of their Lordships. They were aware the laws of England were paralyzed in many parts of Ireland; that the laws and canons of Rome superseded the efficiency of British judicature there; and that the trial by jury, the glory of the British constitution, and one of its brightest features, was a curse to that country. Oaths were reckoned binding or not, according to the circumstances to which they referred or the subjects to which they related; and even murder itself as he was able to prove, had been palliated—nay, encouraged, and considered praiseworthy under certain circumstances. The great end or object, as he believed, was the annihilation of the Protestant faith in Ireland. But he entreated their Lordships not to consider the subject which he had brought forward that night as a mere Irish subject, for it was clearly connected with the best interests of the empire at large. It was impossible to separate the interests of England from those of Ireland, so closely were they united; and, even whilst he was addressing their Lordships, Ireland was the battle-field of the empire for the Protestant Establishment. It had been said in the time of Queen Elizabeth, and true enough it was

"He who would ever England win
"Must in Ireland first begin."

That was also true now. He trusted, therefore, that their Lordships would consider that he had laid before them sufficient grounds for inquiry into this subject. He had occupied too much of their Lordships' time, but he had an important, though plain, duty to perform —to bring this matter under their consideration. He hoped he had said nothing in the course of his address to hurt the feelings of a single person; but, if he had, he would affirm that it had been far from his intention to have done so. He had only said that which he believed to be true, and he left the case in their Lordships' hands, imploring them, for the sake of humanity and justice towards all classes and denominations of persons in Ireland, to give it their most serious and anxious consideration. The noble Earl concluded by moving for a select committee to inquire into the state of Ireland since the year 1835 with respect to the commission of crime.

The Marquess of *Normanby* spoke as follows*:—I am perfectly ready, my Lords, at this moment, and in its fullest extent, to meet the responsibility of anything which the noble Earl has been able to lay to my charge. The noble Earl calls that responsibility awful, and awful, indeed, would it be, my Lords, if the evidence upon which these charges were supported, at all equalled the vehemence of language, and the earnestness of manner, with which they have been brought forward. The noble Earl is always personally courteous, but his denunciations have on this occasion been strong indeed. With natural indignation, I am ready, in reply, to prove now on the floor of this House, before I conclude, that I have grappled with crime wherever I found it, that I have vindicated the law wherever it was violated, that I have grappled with crime continuously—that I have vindicated the law successfully — and so far from the noble Earl being justified in drawing an invidious distinction between me and my noble and gallant Friend (Lord Anglesey), in this respect — that it is not only now, in your Lordships' House, and as a means of justification in your eyes, that I state I would, in similar circumstances, have done as he did, but that I took occasion, when visiting a part of the country, which had been peculiarly disturbed in his time, in answering an allusion to its improvement, to remark, that had the case been unhappily different, it would have been the utmost of my ambition to emulate the personal energy, which he then so advantageously displayed in repressing crime and vindicating the law. I will, however, prove, if not to the noble Earl's satisfaction, at least to his conviction, that the state of Ireland is not unparalleled —that it is not, as he states, unparalleled in his recollection—I will prove this, not merely from vague letters, which, even though they are from magistrates, can only be considered as their personal representations, since they are not pretended to be founded on depositions taken in their magisterial character. I will ground my answer on extracts from the despatches of former Lords-lieutenant of Ireland, respecting the state of that country in their time, comparing it then with the most exaggerated reports of its condition under my administration. I will also refer to another most unequivocal test; the charges of the judges during the last three years contrasted with former times. The noble Earl says he has gone through twelve counties. He may have named twelve counties to your Lordships, but how? In reference to isolated crimes still in existence—but that those counties thus alluded to, are in a worse state than before my administration, I am prepared to disprove most satisfactorily by evidence which I will offer your Lordships. What, however, is the ground of this extraordinary motion, for extraordinary it most certainly is? If the state of the country is not unparalleled, the course pursued by the noble Earl certainly is? From whom does this motion proceed? The noble Earl states he speaks in the name of the Protestants of Ireland. I deny any such delegation as the noble Earl claims. Amongst the Protestants of Ireland, there are a numerous, influential, and enlightened body, who differ far more widely from the noble Earl in politics than from the Pope in matters of faith. But what will the Catholics of Ireland think of the motion of the noble Earl? Are they not to be considered? He says, that socially he lives on good terms with his Catholic fellow-countrymen. But what is his political position? Is he not known as the grand master of the Orange lodges in Ireland—and, depend upon it, if the noble Earl is successful in his motion, the effect of it will be in Ireland to convince all parties there, that under the auspices of the late grand master of the Orange lodges of Ireland—the same still in feeling though not in name—your Lordships have taken the executive Government of Ireland into your own hands. The noble Earl has spoken of individual cases, and yet, to show his want of correct information, he has referred to the murderers of Muirhead. [The Earl of *Roden:* I did not mention Muirhead.] The murderers then of Cathcart; but in every case of the murderers of Lord Lorton's Protestant tenantry, there are at this moment persons in custody awaiting their trials, except in that of Muirhead; where a conviction has already taken place, and execution has, by this time, been possibly done upon the unhappy criminals. The noble Earl, to show his general inaccuracy, has alluded to the case of Roscommon, and to the excitement there produced by the general election. Why, in Roscommon there was no contest at the last general election. Then, with reference to the case of Lord Norbury, your Lordships have been called upon to discuss a question, at this moment in the course of judicial investigation. The noble Earl still relying upon his information—too little trustworthy, as I can prove it to be — states, that there is no trace of evidence nor suspicion against any one in this case. Why, my Lords, to prove how ill timed are such assertions on such subjects, there are two persons in custody at this moment. I had this morning intelligence of their arrest. The noble Earl, three weeks ago, put a question on the same subject to me. I then stated, that two other persons were in custody; two soldiers, one an informer against his comrade. Of this case I may now speak, though I am aware of the force of that caution hinted to me by the judicial mind of my noble and learned Friend (Lord Plunket), but this case, as concerns these two men, has now had a legal termination; the approver has already been convicted of perjury in the accusation against his comrade; yet upon a former occasion, the noble Earl followed up his first question by the extraordinary one of whether I thought there was much probability of a conviction against these men? Why, my Lords, ought not such a question to be a sufficient warning to you of the nature of the inquiries which will be put, if you take the extraordinary — the mischievous — the groundless course of referring such matters to the committee, which is the object of the noble Earl's motion? I will now proceed to examine the present state of crime in Ireland, with a view to prove to your Lordships, that it is not from any individual cases, however distressing, or revolting, the particular circumstances which have marked those atrocities, you can infer the general character of the country; but your opinion should be founded on pains taken in analyzing returns, and comparing the state of the country in one year, with that which those returns present in another. When I addressed your Lordships on the noble Earl's previous motion, the position which I endeavoured to establish was, first, that crime was less now than it was formerly, both in extent and atrocity; secondly, that there were more committals in proportion to the number of crimes; and, thirdly, that there were more convictions in proportion to the number of committals. If, therefore, I can establish these three propositions, which I think I can, and that the country is in a better state now than before my administration, I shall at least free the Government from any blame, for not grappling, as the noble Earl has said, with crime in Ireland. To continue what I stated on that occasion, I beg to recal to your Lordships' recollection, that I never said, that Ireland was in an entirely satisfactory state, but, that it was in a state of progressive improvement. My words were, "that species of tranquillity for which the Government have either received or taken credit, is not of a nature to make occasional exceptions or interruptions, a contradiction to its general continued existence. It is sufficient for us, that we see every reason to believe, that the improvement is, upon the whole, progressive." With respect to certain offences of the worst description, affecting the security of life and property, or involving open violations of the public peace, I, upon that occasion, read to your Lordships extracts from the constabulary returns — establishing, with reference to those offences, a gradual diminution from the commencement of my Government. The last period then quoted was the first nine months of the year of which I was then speaking, the year 1837. I will now, by way of continuing the comparison in the simplest manner, quote offences in the three last months of that year and the corresponding or last three months of the following year, 1838.

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* From a corrected report, published by Ridgway.

	1838.	1837.
Homicides . .	58	52
Firing at the person .	14	36
Cutting and maiming, and aggravated assaults .	209	329
Rapes and assaults, with intent . .	21	23
Abductions . . .	4	4
Levelling . .	6	20
Incendiary Fires .	125	147
Burglary . . .	24	48
Attacks on Houses .	99	182
Demands or Robbery of Arms . .	68	91
Unlawful Oaths . .	8	20
Illegal Notices and Meetings . . .	92	182
Riots and Faction Fights .	29	55
Rescue and Resistance to Legal Process .	12	65
Totals . .	769	1254

The Marquess of *Westmeath*: Are you speaking from returns, and what returns?

The Marquess of *Normanby*: I speak from the regular constabulary returns, and am not quoting from newspapers or pamphlets, or private letters, as is sometimes done, but from official returns,—so that in the year 1837, for the period I have mentioned, the number of serious offences was 1,254, and for the same period in 1838, only 769. So that there is, evidently, a great decrease in the state of crime; am I not, therefore, as right now, as I notoriously was in 1837, in saying that the improvement is progressive? I will now look to the returns of the last five years; and, with respect to cases of homicide, I regret to say, there is no reduction—on an average it is the same. In 1837 the number was the smallest, and the largest in 1834. In the latter year, it appears that the number was 278; in 1835, 261; in 1836, 231; in 1837, 228; in 1838, 248. During the same period, for firing at the person, the numbers were, 1834, 105; in 1835, 83; in 1836, 78; in 1837, 91; in

1838, only 47. For attacks on houses and firing into dwellings, the numbers were in 1834, 923; in 1835, 818; in 1836, 518; in 1837, 637; in 1838, only 352. For demands and robbery of arms, in 1834, 224; in 1836, 147; in 1837, 246; in 1838, 176. For cutting and maiming and aggravated assaults, 1834, 1,343; 1835, 1,422; 1836, 1,161; 1837, 944; 1838, 838;—am I not, I again ask, entitled to say, that the improvement is progressive? I have also here a summary of the returns from the Inspectors of Prisons, of persons committed and convicted from 1832 to 1838. I could not expect your Lordships to follow me through all the details even of this summary if I were to read it, but it again serves to establish my position, that crime has diminished and convictions have increased. I will read only that part which shews the offences affecting human life.*

From 1832 to 1838, committals have diminished from 772 to 575; the convictions increased from 203 to 298. Your Lordships will, of course, always bear in mind, that the returns of the constabulary give the offences committed; those of the inspectors of prisons the offenders confined. Now, let us, my Lords, for a moment turn to a comparison made, I believe, with great accuracy, between the amount of crime in England and in Ireland. In England and Wales the committals in 1837 were 23,612; the convictions, 17,096. In Ireland, the same year, committals, 14,804; convictions, 9,536. The comparison cannot be so clearly made in any previous year, because, up to that time the petty sessions were included in the Irish returns. Your Lordships will, however, be surprised to learn, that the proportion of sentence of death to the whole population is, in England 1 in 26,992; in Ireland, 1 in 46,014. Transportation for life in England, 1 in 18,258; in Ireland, 1 in 30,460. The proportion of the capital sentences to the total convictions, is in England and Wales, death 1 in 39—in Ireland 1 in 62. Total for transportation in England 1 in 4½—in Ireland 1 in 8½, and it is in the imprisonment cases that the numbers are nearly equal. The proportion of convictions to committals is, in both countries, nearly the same, or about 71 per cent. These calculations of comparison between the different divisions of the empire, are of course not the regular official documents from which I have been previously quoting, but they are from tables constructed with great care,

	1832.		1833.		1834.		1835.		1836.		1837.		1838.	
	Committed.	Convicted.	Committed.	Convicted.	Committed.	Convicted.	Committed.	Convicted.	Committed.	Convicted.	Committed.	Convicted.	Committed.	Convicted.
Murder or Manslaughter .	620	168	687	274	575	299	712	309	620	292	519	175	424	199
Shooting at, Stabbing, and Administering Poison	72	26	70	18	74	11	78	22	65	25	48	13	36	9
Assault with intent to Murder .	22	2	55	11	47	3	113	71	127	97	111	72	104	85
Conspiracy to Murder . .	58	7	14	—	33	2	19	7	31	11	10	3	11	5
Total Offences Affecting Life .	772	203	826	303	729	245* (Sic orig.)	922	409	843	425	688	263	575	298

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* See Table.

and upon which I believe perfect reliance can be placed. I feel now obliged, by the particular details into which the noble Lord has gone, to refer to former periods by way of shewing that he is not accurate when he represents the state of Ireland during my government as unparaleled. This will be an irksome task to me, and, I fear, must be wearisome to your Lordships. It is, indeed, painful to have to revive the records of by-gone misdeeds; I must, however do so, not to blacken the character of a people amongst whom such things have been perpetrated, but to shew, that if the Government is at all answerable for crimes, which after all are in the main traceable to defects in the social system, the blame must as much attach to the harsher rule of the days of ascendancy as to the more conciliatory policy of the recent system. I could, according to Mr. Peel's declaration, in bringing in the Catholic Relief Bill, choose at random any period between the Union and that day, for he justly observed, that there was hardly a year in which Ireland had been under the ordinary form of the Constitution; but I will take two epochs as examples, as they were both connected with somewhat similar moves in this House, and though neither partaking of the culpatory character of the noble Earl's motion, were both resisted by the minister of the day. The first period was the year 1816, during Lord Whitworth's time, when the Duke of Bedford made a motion in this House, referring to the state of Ireland. Lord Whitworth's despatch alluded to the disturbances which had taken place from the year 1811. He stated, that convictions had produced no good effects, and that, in many instances, justice had not been obtained on account of the intimidation of witnesses and juries. He stated, that in 1814, the Peace Preservation Act had to be put in operation in Tipperary; applications were made from 28 magistrates of Westmeath, and from 20 magistrates of Clare, for assistance to preserve the peace of their districts, and were refused. Lord Whitworth stated, that dragoons, some of whom were killed, were obliged to be called out to defend the mail coaches, and their barracks had been afterwards attacked. In 1816, occurred the assassination of Mr. Wm. Baker. Here was a case which showed, in all its parts, a successful and extended conspiracy. Mr. Baker had pursued to justice several persons belonging to an armed party, who had attacked and burned a house. A conspiracy was in consequence formed to murder him, and the deed was perpetrated by five persons in mid-day. Parties had been stationed on all the roads by which he could return from Cashel, and when the shot was fired, a savage shout of exultation arose from every side, announcing to all the parties implicated, the death of their victim. In Clare, at that time, many houses had been plundered of arms; ninety meetings of the populace had taken place, and seven houses been burnt; and in the despatch of Lord Whitworth, he alluded to the disparity which took place at that time between the convictions and committals. By the paper to which he alluded, I can prove to your Lordships, that the disparity was very remarkable at that time. So far from there being, as now, four convictions in five, there was not at that period, one conviction in five; and Lord Whitworth attributed this to the intimidation of witnesses and juries. The next period was in the year 1822. A noble Friend of mine, who is prevented by indisposition from being present this night, (the Marquess of Lansdowne) brought forward a resolution at that time to consider if any measure could be brought in which would tend to the tranquillity of Ireland. In that year Lord Wellesley stated, amongst many similar reports, that 200 armed men on horseback, had met to commit depredations, and had attacked several houses, and also a number of persons coming out of church in one county. And in Clare and Galway 200 men in a body had attacked a number of persons. But, perhaps, it may be said, these outrages were then of a different sort—that since the passing of the Emancipation Act these offences have assumed a religious character—that what we now complain is, that, under the late Government, Protestant life and property are not secure. But what says Lord Wellesley in the year 1822, quoting that excellent authority, the Provost of Bandon? Why, that thirty-seven houses had been attacked, all belonging to Protestants; a large quantity of arms taken, and the persecuted Protestants obliged to quit the country and seek protection in towns. Tipperary was represented as bad as ever. It was in that year that the famous encounter between Lord Bantry and 500 armed men took place, he having thirty mounted gentry and fourteen troopers to oppose them. Serjeant Torrens, in charging the jury at Limerick on that occasion, stated, that "the convictions there would give satisfaction to the few loyal people in that neighbourhood." A magistrate of the county of Kilkenny, stated, at that time, that "all control over the disposal of landed property was superseded by the sort of code established." I have quoted this, because the year 1822 was a year in which the noble Earl opposite, making, I believe, his first appearance in this House, stated as follows :—

"It would be in him a dereliction of duty were he not to state the conviction of his mind, that the great cause of these evils was non-residence. It was the great number of absentee landlords which formed the principal evil. Their absence broke those links which were necessary to preserve confidence between the different ranks and relations of society. While adverting to the spirit of outrage which unfortunately prevailed in Ireland, he should be guilty of a great omission were he not to acknowledge the vast improvement which had taken place during the last ten years."

A great improvement had taken place in the last ten years, had it? What, when the Provost of Bandon describes successful attacks upon thirty-seven Protestant houses! When landlords retained no power over the disposal of their landed property! When Lord Bantry, with thirty armed Yeomanry, and backed by regular troops, was obliged, as may be seen in a despatch from Sir John Lambert, to retreat before an armed mob of 500 men! If the country was improved then, what is it now? And can the noble Earl, even if every one of his unauthenticated statements were true, with a grave face say, that its condition is now unexampled? I could continue the review through other succeeding years; I could ask which of the melancholy instances of individual crime we have still to regret,—which of the cases thus brought before us, could compare with that long chain of guilt growing out of one transaction, commencing with the murder of Mr. Chadwick, in 1827, followed by the assassination of the witness Mara,—the attempt upon the lives of his brothers,—the complication of iniquity shown upon the trial of Grace, by the whole Russell family? Where now are such scenes as the burning of the Sheas, and the sad tragedy of Wild Goose Lodge? With reference to the memorials which have lately come from Tipperary and the King's County, I must read one from the magistrates of the county of Cork, in 1823. The noble Earl's improved times.

"May it please your Excellency,

"We, the magistrates of the county of Cork, assembled at Cork, to carry into effect the provisions of the new Constabulary Act, feel it our duty to lay before your Excellency, for the information of his Majesty's Government, the disturbed state of part of this county, together with the expression of our conviction that the spirit of insurrection is rapidly extending into parts of the county hitherto undisturbed.

"We understand that our County Grand Jury, after the minutest investigation, have presented a sum of about 10,000*l.* for damage sustained by fire, destruction of cattle, breaking machinery, &c. &c., and though the greater part of those outrages have been hitherto confined to a comparatively small portion of the county, yet we regret to say there have been instances of crime connected with the system in various other districts.

"It cannot be necessary to impress on your Excellency the extent of suffering which has been inflicted by the persevering atrocity with which the insurgents have perpetrated the work of destruction. Many are now dependent altogether on the presentments which have been passed for their compensation for all they can be deemed to possess; nor can we feel that property of any description is exempt from the influence of that spirit which unhappily prevails, and is directed against all property whatever.

"By notices posted and personally served, many have been obliged to abandon their farms; witnesses who have prosecuted, have done so at personal risk; persons giving evidence at the present assizes, as to the value of property destroyed, have had their houses burned immediately on their return home; money has been extorted from several, by personal threats, to support and carry on their plans; arms still continue to be plundered, and pikes forged, to arm the disaffected.

"We regret to state that our exertions, aided by the vigorous co-operation of the military, police, and armed associations, have hitherto been insufficient to counteract the designs of men who have set all the constituted authorities and the law of the country at defiance. We therefore feel ourselves imperiously called upon to state to your Excellency, that whatever further measures may be adopted, they cannot be too promptly or vigorously carried into effect.

"Signed by desire of the meeting.

"DONERAILE,
"*Chairman.*"

Cork April 7, 1823.

Again, I ask, is the present state of Ireland unparalleled? Now, my Lords, I proceed to produce to your Lordships the most unequivocal testimony—the most unimpeachable witnesses to the progressive improvement of the country. The charges of the circuit judges at different periods. In the year 1816, it appears from the charges of the several judges which I hold in my hand, and to which any noble Lord may refer, that the state of crime in the counties of Clare, Galway, Louth, Tipperary, King's County, Donegal, Armagh, and many others, which are in my list, was of an aggravated and extended nature. In Clare the calendar exceeded 120, comprising many cases of a very heinous nature. In Limerick the calendar contained 103 prisoners, of which twenty-three were charged with murder. Judge Day said, he held in his hand a calendar, marked with the most atrocious crime that human nature could perpetrate. In Armagh, Judge Moore called the attention of the jury to the unparalleled state of the calendar. (Unparalleled—so the noble Lord did not invent that term as applicable to the period of my government), which demonstrated the county in a most disturbed state, and observed, and referred to the districts, bounding on Louth and Monaghan, and commented on the evil of search and seditious associations, which were extending themselves in Tipperary. Lord Norbury, in addressing the Grand Jury, said, that the outrages against all government and authority which have disgraced the county have now arisen to such a height, that no Government could overlook such offences. In Louth there was a special meeting of magistrates to inquire into the state of the county. In Galway the Insurrection Act applied for. In Donegal a meeting of magistrates to consider its disturbed state. In the King's County the Insurrection Act was in force, and the estimates of its expense for two months was 600*l*. Take another period in the year 1821. In Limerick, bands of armed men were traversing the county, committing depredations and seizing arms. In Monaghan, Baron M'Clelland remarked on the state of the calendar, which contained a considerable number of offences, and many crimes of a heinous nature. In Mayo, Baron Pennefather remarked on the state of the calendar, heavy in number and enormity. In Fermanagh, Judge Jebb deeply regrets the state of the county. In Clare the calendar was very heavy, including eleven for murder. In 1825. Judge Moore remarked on the very bad condition of Tipperary. In Sligo, Baron Smith condoled with them on the state of the calendar, which contained several heinous cases. In Down, Judge Burton observed on the number of cases for murder on the calendar. In Longford there were sixty criminals for trial, and it was alleged, that the Riband system had extended itself to it from Westmeath. In Cork the calendar contained 145, including twenty-three for murder, and twelve for house burning. Again in 1827, Limerick calendar amounted to 193, including sixteen cases of homicide: and Sergeant Lefroy, who presided as judge, remarked that the increase of crime was truly melancholy. In Cork the calendar contained 374, including twenty for murder. In Westmeath there were a number of capital convictions. In Cavan the calendar was very heavy. In Wicklow there were a vast number of convictions. In Down, Judge Jebb said the number of prisoners on the calendar were numerous beyond example. In Tipperary, Judge Burton said, he was concerned to find the list of crimes, not only in number, but in magnitude, unexampled in this or any other county. It is painful to observe the proportion that the crime of murder bears to all the rest, and that this crime is marked by peculiar features of barbarity and atrocity, appearing in many instances to be preconcerted by bodies of men confederated in defiance of all law, to commit a crime, that strikes not alone against individual life, but against the security of all society. In Wexford, Baron Pennefather remarked on the heavy state of the calendar. In Limerick, Judge Jebb remarked on the number in the calendar charged with murder—thirteen or fourteen. In Monaghan, Baron M'Clelland remarked on the immensely heavy state of the calendar, and alluded to the large number of cases in the county of Louth, which he had just left: and although a very small county, no less than 106 indictments were sent to the grand jury. In 1835, during the spring circuit, before I entered upon the Government of Ireland, attention is called to Roscommon, where the calendar contained 102 prisoners for trial—seven for murder, two homicide, three stabbing, &c. In Louth, a small county, the calendar contained fifty-nine for trial, including five for murder. In Leitrim there were seventy-two for trial, and in Monaghan, Judge Johnson, in addressing the grand jury, regretted the state of the calendar, which is heavier than usual. In Westmeath, Baron Smith said, although the calendar is not numerous, it contains several heinous crimes. In Cork, Sergeant Greene said the calendars have been remarkably heavy throughout the Munster circuit, and I find that Cork will not prove an exception. Let me now contrast with this picture the state of some of the counties to which I have adverted in the years 1836 and 1837, and see what the same class of testimony proves with regard to them. In Down, the Chief Justice congratulated the grand jury on the extreme lightness of the calendar. In Louth, Chief Baron Joy said it gave him great satisfaction to observe that the calendar at the present assizes was very small when compared with former years. In Waterford, Chief Justice Bushe remarked on the extreme lightness of the calendar. In Kilkenny, Baron Pennefather congratulated the county on the lightness of the calendar which contrasted happily with the former ones. In the Queen's County, at Maryborough, Judge Johnson congratulated the county on the extreme lightness of the calendar, and said some of the principal cases were adjourned from last assizes. In Wexford, Judge Johnson congratulated the county on the state of the calendar—very few cases. At Fermanagh, Baron Pennefather congratulated the county on the pleasing appearance of the calendar. In Limerick, Judge Perrin congratulated the grand jury on the reduced state of the calendar, which was evidence of the peaceable state of the county. In Kildare, Judge Johnson complimented the grand jury on the lightness of the calendar. In Sligo, Judge Burton remarked on the lightness of the calendar; and in Clare, Baron Foster said, he was happy to congratulate them upon the great diminution of crime, that had taken place in the county, compared with former years. In Carlow, Baron Smith remarked on the lightness of the calendar. In Wexford, Baron Pennefather said, he was happy to inform them there was little to be done. He was really surprised to see a county of such extent so free from crime. 1837.—In Fermanagh, Chief Justice Bushe said, the calendar was only of ordinary description. In the Queen's County, Baron Pennefather said, there is nothing on the face of the calendar which requires observation. In Cork, Sergeant Greene said, there is nothing in the calendar requiring observation. In Roscommon, Judge Burton said, he saw nothing in the calendar, that could make him think, that the county did not enjoy the utmost tranquillity. In Leitrim, Judge Perrin remarked on the lightness of the calendar. In Kerry, Baron Richards said, the calendar was swelled with minor offences that should be tried at sessions. In Down, Judge Torrens said, the offences on the calendar are but of such a nature as must occur from the extent of the county. In Louth, Chief Baron Joy told the grand jury, that the criminal business would be very light. "I cannot help hearing my noble Friend opposite observing, that this would go to prove, that there is no crime at all in the country." My Lords, it is no intention of mine to prove any such absurdity; on the contrary, I regret, as much as any man, that heinous crimes do still remain, exceptions to the general improvement of the country, but the use I make of these charges is to prove, that the Judges take, as they are bound to do, an enlarged view of the subject, and give, by the language they have lately used, as compared with what they were formerly obliged to express, the most indisputable confirmation of the position with which I started. In Limerick, Sergeant Greene said, the calendar was unusually light, containing no crime worthy of comment. In Wexford, King's County, and Kilkenny, Judge Johnson and Foster severally remarked on the lightness of the calendar. In Armagh, Chief Baron Joy said, the calendar contained the smallest number of cases he ever saw. In Kerry, there were only thirty-four for trial. In Donnegal, Baron Pennefather congratulated them on the lightness of the calendar. And, in Monaghan, Judge Burton did the same. Such is the opinion of Judge Burton, a name which I cannot mention even thus incidentally, without paying the humble tribute of my praise to the zeal and energy displayed by that learned person, in undertaking, at my request, in spite of his years and infirmities, the arduous task of holding the late special commission in Tipperary; thus showing, that at least his devotion to his duties had not been impaired—those duties which no one could better discharge. 1838 — Spring assizes. In Meath, there was but little civil or criminal business. In Wexford, there were but twenty-two prisoners for trial, and all minor offences, except two; and Baron Foster, in addressing the grand jury, said, there were no cases that required any observation from him. In Lough Judge Burton, in addressing the jury, said he was happy to state, from the appearance of the cases upon the calendar, it would not be necessary for him to make any lengthened observations, or give them any particular directions. The number of cases was not large; the crimes were not of a serious character; they were such as might be expected in a densely populated county, such as Louth. At Limerick Sergeant Greene said, he was happy to have it in his power to repeat the congratulation, which, at the last assizes, he offered upon the state of the calendar. The offences are neither numerous, nor of a serious character. At Cavan, Judge Torrens congratulated the jury on the state of the calendar. In Kilkenny, the number of prisoners for trial, amounted only to twenty-eight—eleven of the number were bailable offences; and this the quantum of crime in a population amounting to 200,000, In the county, the calendar used to exceed considerably 100. In Kilkenny county, Baron Foster, congratulated the jury on the lightness of the calendar, and said it formed a great contrast with former calendars in the county. In Waterford county and city Baron Foster and Judge Moore, congratulated the juries on the lightness of the calendars. 1838 — Summer assizes. In Wicklow, there were but eighteen prisoners on the calendar, and Judge Moore said, the extremely peaceful state of the county spoke so well, both for the higher and lower classes in the county. In Louth, Judge Burton said, the state of the calendar rendered any observations unnecessary. In Kilkenny, Judge Crampton said, he was happy to find, that his labour would be light. In Clare, Baron Richards congratulated the jury upon the lightness of the calendar. In Roscommon, Judge Perrin said — It is with great satisfaction, I feel myself called on to congratulate you on the peaceable and tranquil state of your great and populous county. And in Leitrim, Sergeant Greene said, he took occasion to express his great pleasure at witnessing the very light state of the calendar. In the county of Cork, Baron Richards observed, that he had great pleasure in offering his congratulations on the unprecedentedly light state of the calendar; it ought to give the county great pride. In Mayo, Sergeant Greene said, that although there were many cases on the calendar, still, with a few exceptions, they were not of a heinous character. And at Enniskillen, county Fermanagh, Baron Pennefather said, I have to congratulate you on the appearance which your county presents not only by the calendar, which is light, but by its general tranquillity. While in Galway, Judge Perrin said, with the exception of two or three heavy cases standing over from last assizes, there was nothing to call for any particular observation, and nothing that might not be expected in so extensive and populous a county. Sergeant Greene addressed similar observations to the grand jury of the town. And at Armagh, Judge Burton said, from an examination of the calendar, the business would not be heavy or protracted. And in Londonderry, Mr. Justice Torrens said, "I feel pleasure in again congratulating you, and communicating that the calendar is excessively light, in fact, at every successive assizes, I find crime decreasing, and tranquillity becoming established in your county." These, my Lords, were the opinions of the judges, giving the impression on their minds at the time, by a recent examination of all the commitments; and if your Lordships are to go into a Committee, what further evidence can you produce to set against this testimony to the improvement of the country within the last three years. We have had a great many references to the state of Munster in former times—I will read a letter which I have this morning received from Mr. Barrington, a gentleman of well known intelligence and great experience; it relates to the present assizes:—

"Cork, 17th of March, 1839.

"My Lord—This circuit is now drawing to a close, and as Lord Roden's motion is fixed for the 21st, it will be satisfactory to your Lordship to hear, that the counties of Clare Kerry, and Cork, and a great portion of Limerick, are perfectly free from agrarian disturbances. The attendance of witnesses even in those cases arising from insurrectionary outrage, where intimidation might be supposed to prevail, was very great, and the number of convictions bore a greater proportion to the number of cases tried, than had taken place for some years.

"In the county of Clare, the calendar was extremely light, and there was no case of an insurrectionary nature. I observe, however, that Mr. Colquhoun, in the recent debate in the Commons, has alluded to a case which was tried at the Clare assizes, where a person of the name of M'Namara, and others, were tried and acquitted for the murder of a man named Minogue, and has adduced that case as a proof that witnesses are intimidated from giving evidence in Ireland. This case, however, proves exactly the contrary. A field had been let to two different persons, by a father and a son, each of whom claimed property in it. Each tenant brought a large party to till the ground; a general quarrel ensued in which a man named Minogue received a blow which caused his death. Informations were sworn, implicating several persons in the homicide, but a large sum of money, having, it is said, been subscribed and paid to the family of the deceased, they declined to prosecute effectually.

"In Limerick, the calendar was much heavier, and several cases of an insurrectionary nature, such as entering houses searching for arms, administering oaths, and assaulting habitations, were tried at the assizes. There was the fullest attendance of witnesses, in these cases, and convictions had in each, which I am sure will be most useful.

"The assizes of Kerry were concluded in three days; the convictions were chiefly for sheep-stealing.

"In this great county, the calendar is equally light, exhibiting no offence beyond those which occur in every crowded community.

"Upon the whole, I consider, that this circuit affords the most satisfactory evidence of the improved state of the country, and an increasing confidence on the part of the people in the administration of justice,

I have, &c.

"(Signed) M. Barrington."

The noble Earl has spoken of the late and present state of Ireland under my government as unparalleled. No doubt the noble Earl speaks his honest feelings on this occasion; but I will beg to ask whether the noble Earl recollects what was said of the state of Ireland in 1834, under the government of a noble Marquess, (the Marquess of Wellesley), whom I can never speak of, but with the highest respect, and, perhaps, I may say this with somewhat more sincerity than the noble Earl who professed it this evening, for I never heard that during the administration of the noble Marquess, the noble Earl had given him any effectual support, either in this House or elsewhere. Does the noble Earl recollect what was said of the state of Ireland in that year by a rev. gentleman (Mr. Professor Boyton), who was sent over to this country by the Protestant party in Ireland, indeed specially nominated by the noble Earl himself, to convey to Englishmen an accurate picture of the miseries which Protestants were then enduring. That rev. gentleman at a public meeting here, said:—

"It will be difficult to give any idea to the people of this country of the state of Ireland, in which there was a total absence of anything like order or security for property. Imagine if possible, that at the close of day, having examined the lower stories of your houses, and, afterwards, your upper and sleeping apartments, and found all secure, you should afterwards be aroused by seeing flames burst forth as refulgent as those of Birmingham and Wolverhampton, and let you heighten the terror of he scene, by the reflection, that to every fire there was a victim, and you will have a faint idea of the unfortunate condition of many parts of my unhappy country."

This, then, is merely a faint idea, a mere sketchy and indistinct outline of a picture of the state of Ireland given by the rev. gentleman—the emissary of the noble Earl and his Protestant friends—at the time, which the noble Earl has this night represented as that in which crime was grappled with, and the law vindicated, under that noble Marquess, now the object of his sudden adulation; and the noble Earl, the patron, if not the author of the description, which I have just read, has, nevertheless, charged me with not having grappled with crime, with not having vindicated the law—with having produced a state of things unexampled, I will now come to another point, which, though not directly arising out of any statement of the noble Earl, I still feel it necessary to advert to; because, not having any claim to reply, I think I have a right to anticipate arguments, which (from what occurred in another place) I may fairly presume will be used by noble Lords, who will follow me in the debate. I will first advert to the memorial from the magistrates of the county of Tipperary, agreed to at a meeting in which a noble Earl (the Earl of Glengall) not now present took a conspicuous part. The answer to that memorial was objected to, as being supposed to convey a censure on the magistracy and landed gentry of that county. The paragraph objected to, stated, that property had its duties as well as its rights—perhaps an unnecessary truism to any one not aware, that to the neglect of some of those duties had, in all times, been attributed many of the worst evils of Ireland, which broke out in perpetual disorders, in disgraceful outrages. But in more recent resolutions it has also been stated, that this answer had had the effect of increasing animosities against the owners of the soil. Would not any one infer, on reading that resolution, that the sentiment in question which has given offence so disproportioned to its obvious truth had been volunteered as an address to the peasantry, instead of being an answer to a memorial from the magistrates of Tipperary, most unsparing of attacks upon all but themselves and their class? It accused the jurors of violating their oaths—the Government of neglecting its duty, it threw out insinuations in other quarters, usually considered invulnerable. Whilst disregarding such attacks, and passing by such insinuations, the Government vindicated the juries by showing that the convictions in cases of homicide, at the Spring assizes had been to the full average in proportion to the trials, and by quoting the authority of the venerable judge, that the verdicts had been in accordance with his charges. With regard to the ancient custom of challenging jurors, the answer to the memorial corrected a mistake into which the memorialists had fallen, in arguing that the Government had entirely abandoned the practice. The answer upon this point stated, that the privilege of challenging was not abandoned, but that in cases in which the Crown was concerned as prosecutor, it was not adopted except upon what appeared to be a sufficient reason, and that in no instance would it be used merely upon the ground of the religion or politics of the juror, but upon some special ground of exception. It then proceeded to touch upon this evidently tender ground, but in an answer merely to the magistrates themselves, which never saw the light afterwards, till moved for in the other House of Parliament, when certainly, as the magistrates had published their memorial, the answer could not be refused. "Property has its duties as well as its rights,"—this then is tender but not untrodden ground. The effect of too sudden an attempt to correct, by ejectment, the vicious system of subdividing lands which was adopted for purposes no longer available, has been often the subject of discussion and complaint, before this unfortunate truism excited so much misplaced indignation. Why, as far back as at the time of the Committee of the House of Lords in 1825, the report states, that it hopes the increasing intelligence of landlords will correct this evil, with a due regard to the comfort and well being of those directly concerned. (I think I am quoting nearly the words). Now, on all sides, what was more than this the subject of debate at the time of the passing of the Catholic Relief Bill? In the debates on the Catholic question, an hon. and learned Gentleman (Mr. O'Connell) described with great force and feeling the situation of the unhappy peasantry, whose fate was in the hands of those who were not aware that property had its duties as well as its rights. Another hon. and learned Gentleman said, this was a picture drawn by the hand of a master, and wondered that none of the Government attempted to gainsay it. Moved by this appeal, what was the line taken by that Member of the Govenment who did then reply—and from whom did that reply come? An individual who spoke with all the effect of the esteem universally felt for his private character, all the weight of his official station, and all the authority of his recent military experience in Ireland. Sir George Murray thus expressed himself:—

"An hon. Gentleman has alluded to the removal of the peasantry, which has taken place in consequence of depriving the 40*s*. freeholders of the elective franchise. That system was radically defective; it was calculated to create a political influence of real detriment to the landed estates, and to the country. However well the system may sound in name, it was undoubtedly in Ireland a great evil. I admit it was impossible to remove that evil without the danger of incurring that which we feel as one of its consequences, for when the motive of the landlord—namely, the creation of political influence was removed private interest it was to be expected, would step in, and, perhaps, with too harsh a hand cast out the tenantry which no longer answered the purpose for which they had been created."

If, however, any noble Lord opposite supposes that by this much-criticised observation, the Government intended to imply that the landlords of Ireland were bearing more harshly upon their tenants than heretofore, they are perfectly mistaken, as will appear from the words of the answer itself, which are, that "property has its duties as well as its rights, and that it is to the neglect of these in times past, that many and most of the present miseries are to be attributed." I will now advert for a moment to a most distressing occurrence. I mean the murder of Lord Norbury. And when I consider the amiable character of that noble Lord, his position in society, his extensive connections, and the shock which his death occasioncd through the country, it is an occurrence which, in common with your Lordships and every right-minded man in the community, I do indeed deeply deplore. I will not enter into any speculation as to the cause of that melancholy event; but I must say, as yet there is no evidence that the crime was the result of of any extensive conspiracy. Like the murder of Mr. Weyland and others, I believe it arose out of a local conspiracy connected with the possession of land—a conspiracy arising from revenge on the part of those, who were dispossessed of lands which they had held. I will here say a word, as to the high character of the gentlemen who were sent down by Government to investigate the circumstancet connected with the murder of Lord Norbury. I do this, because certain returns connected with their appointment were moved for by a noble Earl opposite, (Lord Charleville), as if there was some intention to found a charge against me for their selection. However, when the returns arrived, whether the noble Earl did not think them likely to answer his object, I know not, but he stated, he did not wish them to be printed. Mr. Brownrigg was a gentleman who had been distinguished by his commanding officers when in the Rifle Brigade; he had been since the year 1832, sub-inspector of the county Kerry, where I had an opportunity of becoming acquainted with and observing his able discharge of the duties of his office. At that time, if he had any politics, of which I really never informed myself, they were supposed not to have been much those of the present Government. He was afterwards, when in Dublin, high in the confidence of Colonel Shaw Kennedy; and it was upon his report that I was further induced to take an early opportunity of promoting him. I would here read your Lordships a letter from Colonel Shaw Kennedy to Mr. Brownrigg, at the time of his quitting the service, but it is hardly necessary thus to occupy your time. Mr. Haly was a gentleman whom it had been the intention of Lord Wellesley to appoint, upon a vacancy, sub-inspector of county Cork; but, upon his own representation that he was a native of Cork, the appointment, which would on that account have been contrary to rule, did not take place. In every situation in which I have since employed him, he has had the good fortune and tact to give general satisfaction. Now, what I complain of in the conduct of the noble Earl opposite, is, that his deportment towards these gentlemen was uncourteous and capricious. He complained to them to them of the Government having sent them down. The noble Earl dissents. I am aware that he did not in the first instance; but the moment they entered seriously upon those functions on which their utility depended, then the noble Earl began to complain of them. It was on the occasion of the examination of Maguire that I find it stated in the report by these gentlemen.

"The examination had just commenced when (about half-past one o'clock) Lord Charleville entered the room in the gaol where the prisoner was under examination by us. His Lordship appeared greatly excited —expressed his astonishment that we should have interfered with Maguire in his absence, and who, his Lordship was of opinion, ought not to have been examined for several days. Lord Charleville then indulged in much invective, and, at some length, against the Government, for whom, he said, he entertained no respect whatever, and in whom he placed no confidence; he also said, he supposed we had received secret instructions.

"We assured his Lordship that we had not received any such instructions, that our orders were to act as already mentioned, and that we were under the full conviction, that in examining Maguire we were acting with his Lordship's concurrence: that nothing was further from our intentions than to shew the least disrespect or discourtesy towards his Lordship or the magistrates.

"Lord Charleville expressed himself quite satisfied with our explanation, and with regret for the warmth of his manner, apologized for anything he might have said to hurt our feelings, adding, that although he felt no respect for the Government, he did for us."

Now surely, my Lords, this is not language which ought to have been used on a solemn occasion like that, in the presence of a person under examination for a heinous offence, and of officers sent down by that Government whom the noble Earl chose in his character of magistrate thus to vilify. If, as the petition, of which a copy has been sent to me, states, "the constituted authorities (as they call themselves) are not treated with proper respect," such conduct as this is not calculated to correct the evil.

"Lord Charleville proceeded to inform us of his intention to bring before the House of Lords the unconstitutional conduct of the Government, in having sent down two gentlemen to supersede the local authorities, and for not having communicated with them on the subject."

The noble Earl does not seem quite to admit this. Then, of course, I will say no more about it, further than this, that the noble Earl is no doubt perfect master of any line he may choose to pursue as to what he may bring before the House of Lords, only that then he had better give his notice here than there. I now come to the noble Earl's speech at the meeting of the King's County magistrates; upon which occasion the noble Earl introduced a variety of topics, spoke with great appearance of preparation, but I think I shall shew that on all the subjects on which he touched, the noble Earl had not taken the necessary pains on one important point—to procure due information with reference to the facts. First, as to the noble Earl's perversion of the real circumstances of a case in which at the early part of my government I exercised to a certain extent the prerogative of mercy, but which the noble Earl considered appropriate to introduce on this occasion. The noble Earl is reported to have thus expressed himself:—

> "When a person is found guilty of the most atrocious crimes, what has been the conduct of the Irish Government, and what the result? One result is the demoralization which we all lament and deplore. I may be told that this is a sweeping charge. I may be called on for proof, that proof I adduce. Do I turn to the east and look to Durrow, the seat of the late outrage? No, I turn to yonder gaol, and in that gaol I hold evidence of the fact to which I have alluded, At March Assizes, 1836, four prisoners were committed to gaol for attempting to murder the steward of Lord Bloomfield. They failed in murdering the steward, they were tried for the attempt, and found guilty, and the man who fired the shot was executed on that drop. My noble Friend, Lord Haddington, was then Lord-lieutenant of Ireland, and knowing well how to execute and wield the power entrusted to him by his Sovereign, thinking as the intended victim had not fallen under the blow of the assassin, that justice was amply requited by the execution of the man who fired the shot, he commuted the sentence on the other three to transportation for life. Within six weeks Lord Mulgrave came to Ireland, superseding my noble Friend in his high office of Lord-lieutenant. He may have received memorials, but every gentleman I address knows how little value is to be attached to a memorial from a county; they are often not the genuine signatures of those they represent; but even supposing them to be genuine, they are often extorted by personal fear from the individuals applied to, and in the general fear of terrorism and intimidation which pervades the county. Well, a petition was presented to the Lord-lieutenant; I understand the name of Lord Bloomfield, the next victim on the list, was attached to it. It may have been so. I know not who said so. I know not who sent it, or who called the Lord-lieutenant's attention to it; but this I know, that the Lord-lieutenant commuted the sentence of transportation to a temporary imprisonment in the gaol of Tullamore."

This was the statement of the noble Earl; will your Lordships allow me to make mine? A very few days after I had arrived in Ireland, I saw Lord Bloomfield, whom I had known long. His Lordship presented to me a memorial, signed by three clergymen and five justices of the peace, besides other respectable neighbours, and he said, that he conceived that it would be better for the peace of the country, as well as for his own comfort, that these men should have their sentences commuted. I told him that in the case of so serious an offence, I could not think of commuting the sentence then, but that I would communicate with the Lord Chief Justice on the subject. I did write to the Lord Chief Justice on the subject, and his Lordship said, that he did not see anything in the circumstances of the case itself that called for commutation, but that the effect of such a step upon the peace of the country was peculiarly a question for the executive to consider. Still I would not exercise the prerogative of the Crown, and I decided that the law must take its course. Before I again saw Lord Bloomfield I had had some communication with the present Judge Perrin, then Attorney-General, whose recommendation was strongly in favour of a commutation, but upon this I still hesitated to act, and I told Lord Bloomfield, when he came to me four months afterwards, that I would not do it then; but that I would do it then, and then only, when the noble Lord could tell me that the country was in a better state. At length, after the lapse of one year, after renewed application to me on the part of Lord Bloomfield that the sentence might be commuted. I gave the necessary direction that the commutation might take place, but not that the sentence should be commuted, as the noble Earl stated, "to a temporary imprisonment," but to two years imprisonment, and for the remaining portion of it with hard labour. I hope your Lordships will not fail to remark that this is one of the cases which are said by those who are in the habit of making attacks on my Government, to have been decided in a summary manner, and as the noble Earl says, "we don't know how." Really I think, as the noble Earl was in the country at the time, he ought to have informed himself of the real state of the case, before he ventured these attacks upon her Majesty's Government. But see, my Lords, how misrepresentation spreads. It was stated a few days afterwards, on the authority of this speech of the noble Earl's, at a meeting in the north of England, by a noble Marquess, the cause of whose absence to-night I much regret, that I had liberated these men because the Catholic priest interposed, and the Catholic peasantry memorialized in their behalf. Intimidation, too, was stated by the noble Earl as causing Lord Bloomfield's application. But I must say, I think the well known character of Lord Bloomfield is a security against the possibility of intimidation. But it is necessary I should add, that Lord Bloomfield was so struck with the erroneous representations of the noble Earl, that he wrote to the noble Earl explaining the real circumstances, and saying that he did it to enable him to correct the erroneous impression his speech was calculated to make, which he was sure he would be desirous to do: and he sent a copy of his letter to me. [The Earl of *Charleville:* Did he send you my answer.] Yes, he did; and I thought it was most unsatisfactory. But the noble Earl had not yet done with the consequences of the ignorance in which he had spoken. Mr. Johnston Stoney, the gentleman who had been shot at, writes to the noble Earl, complaining most justly and temperately of the prejudice to the administration of justice which such a course as that pursued by the noble Earl was likely to inflict. But the noble Earl's notion of justice seems to be, that when persons are awaiting their trials, it is then the fittest time to excite a prejudice against them; for, when the case of Ward and Gannon was again brought forward the other night, the noble Earl gave as a reason for not having mentioned their former offence before, that they were not then in custody. In this instance Mr. Johnston Stoney, the person fired at, gives his opinion that they were not the guilty party. He also corrects the noble Earl in another point, shewing that he could not have carefully informed himself on any part of the subject. There was no shot at all fired at Lord Bloomfield's steward, as was asserted by the noble Earl. Mr. Stoney's letter elicited the following reply from the noble Earl—

"Charleville Castle, Tuesday Jan

"SIR,—I had the honour to receive your letter of the 19th inst. this day, and though I read several Dublin papers, yet I cannot find the expressions quoted by you and attributed to me. I did not assume the guilt of the prisoners. I did not express any public or private opinion as to their guilt. I did not designate their crime as the most atrocious.

"I have the honour to be, &c.

"CHARLEVILLE.

"J. Stoney, Esq., Emall Castle,"

Did not express any opinion of their guilt! did not designate their crime as the most atrocious! Why, in the extract I have read from the report in the *Evening Mail,* in the last line the question is asked, "what is the crime?" which surely assumes guilt—else accusation is the word—but in the first line as applied to them is the phrase even "the most atrocious crimes." So that we gather, coupling this report from the *Evening Mail,* with the noble Earl's declaration, this curious collateral fact, that the noble Earl does not read the *Evening Mail.* I admire his taste, though I cannot say much for his gratitude, as certainly to that source he owes much of his recent fame. I read the *Evening Mail,* because it abuses me, if it praised me as it does the noble Earl: from which I trust I may be preserved, I, should follow the noble Earl's example. Then again, the noble Earl in the course of his speech assumes, on the slightest possible grounds, the guilty participations. as he stated, of the whole population, in the murder of Lord Norbury, because, according to him, two persons, who must therefore, have had a foreknowledge of the intention, came to the lodge where Lord Norbury was, and asked if he was dead. Now, what were the real facts as proved by the depositions of the lodge-keeper, Eliza Charnley, and an old pensioner who, with his companion, were the persons who came to the gate. It appeared that the woman had told them what had happened when she met them on the road, and the old soldier who it happened was not a Catholic peasant, but a Scotchman and a Presbyterian, said to his companion, "I have had some experience of gun-shot wounds, let us return and see if we can be useful;" and thence their inquiry as to his being alive. They both remarked afterwards upon the inexplicable conduct of the steward, who passed through the people returning from the funeral, without giving any intimation, or attempting to procure assistance; had this been done, the deposition goes on to say, the murderer must, in all probability, have been secured. Now, one more mistake; and it is really almost the only other statement of fact made in the noble Earl's speech, which produced such an effect upon his brother magistrates as to induce them to pass these extraordinary resolutions. The noble Earl stated something about two persons having been engaged to murder two different parties, and having for special reasons changed the lots, and the one who was to murder the man taking the woman instead. This story gained additional currency from having been been adopted apparently from the speech of the noble Earl by the noble and learned Lord near me, who stated it to your Lordships on the first night of the Session more clearly and forcibly, but not as it appears more correctly. I understand the effect upon your Lordships was great; but I am sure he will be happy to have any effect destroyed which was produced from such a painful source. The statement was this:—

> "Notwithstanding all these difficulties we have had it proved within the last month, that when it was resolved by persons minded to kill two individuals, that one should kill the man and the other the woman, an objection was made—not to the criminality—not to the foul and hideous crime of murder,—but that the person on whom the lot had fallen to kill the woman, happened to have some conviction that it was more convenient that he should kill the man; so he changed the parts, and both the man and woman were murdered. And yet, my Lords, to my infinite astonishment I have heard the Crown lawyers who conducted the prosecution congratulate themselves and the country that the charges of conspiracy had been disproved;—that there existed no 'extensive' conspiracy in that part of the United Kingdom."

Now, I had hardly finished reading this, before I sent for the Solicitor-General to inquire how it was if this had been proved, and as it appeared at the late commission in Tipperary, that I had never heard any thing about it. He said, that it was equally new to him. I then desired that circulars should be addressed to the Crown solicitors of all the circuits through whom the prosecution, if any, must have proceeded. I hold in my hand the replies from them all, not only distinctly denying any official knowledge of such a fact, but adding that they cannot even understand on what such a story can have been founded. The special commission at Tipperary has been alluded to. So far from any thing having been elicited there to prove the existence of a general or extended conspiracy, I take the direct contrary to have been the fact. Convictions were pronounced on the evidence of informers. Great individual depravity was proved, but it appeared evident that the conspiracy, such as it was, was of a local character, and for limited objects—connected in short with the tenure of land, and extending to the connections or clan of those affected by the particular acts out of which the intention to commit the crime arose. One thing however I may observe, with respect to the convictions before the Tipperary commission, that it was so far satisfactory, as it proved that jurors of every degree and shade of opinion, some of them being of much stronger political opinions than I could approve, can be brought to do substantial and impartial justice. With respect to a charge that has been circulated that I commuted the sentence of the law in the case of two persons of the names of Kelly and Hourigan, convicted of killing another by beating him with stones: and that I did this without a communication with the judges, and because I conceived that death by stones was not to be considered as murder. This monstrous misrepresentation having obtained considerable circulation through the press, and being calculated to create a most injurious impression upon the minds of the peasantry, I communicated with the learned judges Burton and Perrin, who agreed with me that it would be desirable, if an opportunity occurred, to correct so injurious an error by stating the real facts of the case. These are, that I twice rejected memorials for a remission of the capital punishment, on the ground that the malice appeared to me to have been proved in the evidence and that the instrument with which the fatal blow was struck ought not to make any distinction, but when a memorial came from many of the jury begging a reference to the judges, I could not of course interpose my opinion in a case of life and death, and after two communications I got a distinct and conjoint recommendation, founded doubtless on their better means of information that the capital sentence should not be carried into effect. This brings me to a portion of the attacks upon my government which I am most anxions to put correctly before your Lordships. I allude to an alleged abuse of the prerogative of mercy. Now this charge relates principally to what passed in the year 1836. It comes, then, after repeated opportunities have occurred of bringing the whole subject before the House, and after the noble Earl made a motion, eighteen months ago, of a very similar character to the present, and when every document referring to the subject has been ten months on the table of the House. As to individual cases which may have occurred since, I have on all occasions shown every desire to give the fullest explanation, when they have been brought separately before your Lordships;

selected as those cases have been, as I have frequently said, with considerable care, by those who brought them forward, but all, I think, in the opinion of your Lordships, capable of receiving a satisfactory answer. Now to correct some of the misunderstanding as to the exercise of this prerogative, on personal inspection of the gaols, in the years 1835 and 1836, but principally for a reason which I shall explain to your Lordships, in the latter year. The cases upon which I then decided, were of three descriptions. The first, those upon which there had been much previous inquiry—as was shown the other night in the case of Ward and Gannon, one of those on which I had been supposed to have decided summarily and capriciously. Upon all of these, what passed was only the communication upon that occasion of a previously formed decision, sometimes merely reserved up to that time for some final local inquiries. The second class were those of whom there were several instances, both in 1835 and 1836. Persons convicted of light offences, whose sentences were very nearly expired, and who were recommended on account of their exemplary conduct in confinement, by all the authorities, the local inspector, (in every instance but one a Protestant clergyman) the governor of the gaol—their recommendations generally backed by the testimony to previous character on the part of some accompanying magistrates. I received, some months afterwards, the most satisfactory accounts from the local inspectors, of the benefit this very limited indulgence had been in maintaining the discipline of the gaol, and improving the character of its inmates. The third class to which I applied the exercise of the prerogative, upon the occasion of my tour in 1836, was most numerous in the gaol of Clonmel. There and elsewhere, the law had been pressed with unexampled certainty and severity, through the officers of the Government, against a sort of offence which had previously been neglected, if not encouraged —hardly ever punished. I mean faction fights, and riots at fairs.

In passing sentences upon some of these and others for assaults, Mr. Howley, the assistant-barrister—a gentleman who has the singular good fortune, in a most arduous situation, to have given universal satisfaction— Mr. Howley stated, that the sentences were of a nature, which might, perhaps, receive subsequent mitigation, if the state of the country in those respects became better. Mr. Howley afterwards spoke to me in the same sense, and, in visiting Clonmel, my object was to inform myself as to those persons convicted of this particular sort of offence, who had been best conducted in gaol, whose sentence was most advanced, and who came from a part of the country which was in a most improved state. As to the result of this experiment, we have some months after the testimony of Mr. Howley, who, in his charge to the grand jury at the quarter sessions of the county Tipperary, in October, 1837. observes:—

> "Occasional acts of clemency, judiciously exercised towards offenders, act with a moral force, oftentimes as effective as the cell."

And further in reference, to these particular cases—

> "No person can deny, that the experiment was at least worth the trial; and if it should not, in the end, produce the good effects which his Excellency, who humanely applied so lenient a remedy, looked for, it must be only cast aside amongst the legislative lumber of insurrection and coercion acts, which, I believe, are no longer looked upon as specific for Irish disturbance. But so far as I have yet had an opportunity of judging, I should say, with great submission to those who would propound a contrary opinion, that any clemency exercised towards persons convicted at the Quarter Sessions of this county, has rather worked beneficially than otherwise; and it may be some proof that it was not unworthily bestowed, that not one of the objects of it have been since been brought before me for trial; while the factions riots, for partaking in which a number of those discharged had been convicted, have almost entirely ceased within the county."

Two things I distinctly deny, that upon these occasions any persons detained for serious offences were discharged without there having been mature previous inquiry. And, secondly, that any were discharged, merely because I happened to pass through the town, who would not have been equally considered as entitled to the same indulgence upon facts stated in a memorial. Now, as to the general question of the exercise of the prerogative of mercy—the best mode to arrive at the truth is to analyse a return, which I hold in my hand, of the memorials presented to me, and the decisions upon them, since the last motion of the noble Earl in November, 1837, when all the facts to which I have been just alluding might have been brought before the House, and ought to have been so, if noticed at all. From the 1st of November, 1837, to the 31st of January, 1839, there have been presented to me 1,631 memorials;—of these, there were decided unfavourably, without reference to judge or assistant barrister, 371; unfavourably, after such reference, 431; favourably, without reference to judge or assistant barrister, 188; favourably, after such reference, 634. It is obvious, that the principal observations must apply to the 188 decided favourably, without reference to any such authority; but of these, forty-three being fines under green wax, or warrants for non-attendance as jurors, or fines for having unregistered arms, were, in point of fact, referred to the proper officers, either the solicitor of the Crown revenue, or clerk of the peace, or convicting magistrates. There remain, therefore, the 145 to be dealt with. I have here in my hand an explanation, as far as time permitted, of each of these cases, and I think I need not mind being questioned on any of them. They are in three classes: the first, where a remission of sentence, from the time when the memorial was considered, took place—sixty-two; a second class, where health was either the only ground or an ingredient in the decision—twenty-four; a third, where only a prospective mitigation was given—fifty-nine. In all these there are only three cases of transportation, in all of which the mitigation took place upon the certificate of unfitness for the voyage: one of these is an old acquaintance, Michael Brien, of whom we have latterly heard so much. But to examine the matter in another way, the whole actual mitigation or remission of sentence of the sixty-two and fifty-nine, all taken together, does not amount to much above 140 months in all, or one fourteen years' transportation divided amongst them all, as the whole extent of mitigation. But then, it is said by some, that the lavish manner in which I have exercised the prerogative of mercy, has promoted the more numerous presentation of memorials—more certainty of the success of such appeals. How is the fact? Some nights since I quoted a speech of Sir Robert Peel's in 1824, upon a motion of Mr. Hume's, for the abolition of the office of Lord-lieutenant; he stated, as a reason against it, the increase of business it would entail upon the Home-office; and cited, as an instance, that Lord Wellesley, in the year preceding, had before him 2,600 memorials, and that the capital sentence had been set aside in 400 cases.—2,600 memorials in twelve months! why, 1,600 in the last fifteen months, is only in the proportion of one-half! 400 capital sentences set aside in twelve months! How many capital sentences do your Lordships imagine were set aside in the last twelve months? Just nine; and all, of course, by the recommendation of the learned judges; as also, I presume, were those of the noble Marquess. Do not let it be supposed that I would, in the slightest degree, insinuate blame, any more than Mr. Peel did, in making the statement. Much of the difference between the capital sentences set aside at one time or the other, of course arises from the altered state of the country, and the changes in the law; but at least it shews how much foundation there is for the charge against me, of having encouraged any extraordinary increase of these memorials. Another way of judging the effect of such an experiment as that I tried is, by the number of re-committals. Every one who has studied the statistics of crime, knows the constant tendency of those once inured to guilt to revert to evil courses, and in consequence the immense numbers who habitually return to prison. Your Lordships will recollect we have been talking of convictions, amounting very nearly, including those at petty sessions, to 20,000 in a year. How many do your Lordships think, by a return which I hold in my hand, of those whose sentences were mitigated by me have since been re-committed within the last two years? Just twenty-one; and as the original offences of most of these were light, so were the grounds of recommittal, as I find here, amongst the twenty-one, such atrocities as "breaking windows," "throwing stones," "found "drunk." This, then, my Lords, I say, as to the liberation of the prisoners in the year 1836, that it rested on grounds very different from those usually attributed to it; that in the peculiar circumstances of that country at the moment when severity had so often been tried, it was an experiment well worth the trial; that I never mentioned it as an experiment to be lightly repeated; but that I have every reason, from the best testimony, to be gratified with its success; that if questioned at all here, it ought to have been questioned before. Then as to the general exercise of the prerogative, I challenge comparison with my predecessors, without, I need not again repeat, wishing to make any invidious reference; but, defending myself by maintaining at the same time the course pursued by them; I have the opinions of some of the judges, with whom I have little personal and no political connexion, that no Lord-lieutenant ever took more pains in the examination of each case, or was more generally in accordance with their reports. With regard to what the noble Earl has said of secret oaths, I do not believe in their existence to the extent pretended; certainly not by any means in the shape of a general confederacy. It was impossible for me to say, that ribbonism was entirely extinct in Ireland, but I hold in my hand documents which would prove that Government had not overlooked the fact whenever they could touch it; but still with every effort on our part, and every desire to put an end to the last vestige of that system, we have not been able to procure evidence sufficient to obtain a conviction; and I must say, that of all expedients ever hit upon, a Committee of your Lordships' House was, in the circumstances of the case, the least likely to elicit the truth. When this question was formerly discussed, I stated, that Government had observed traces of ribbonism, but that they had no evidence of any general conspiracy partaking at all of a political character, but that, whenever any information could be offered, Government would examine and endeavour to probe it to the bottom. On another point I have been frequently accused of a disposition to appoint exclusively Catholics to the prejudice of Protestants. Mind, in the list I read in answer, I do not claim any merit in the proportions in which they appear, any further than as it is an answer to an unjust charge. The merits of the appointments must rest upon the intrinsic character of each. Of judges and assistant barristers I have appointed eight Protestants, six Catholics. Of the higher appointments of the constabulary, sixty-nine Protestants, thirty-seven Catholics. Of promotions in that force, twenty-seven Protestants, eight Roman Catholics. The disproportion here is greater from there having been fewer officers of long standing Catholics. Of legal and other appointments in the courts and offices in Dublin, Protestants forty; Catholics thirty-seven. Another ground of attack was, that I had not taken strong measures for putting down the Precursor Society. The noble Earl says, I am not answerable for the establishment of that society; but that, being established, I should have used every exertion to put it down. Now, this is a question which has puzzled many Governments before now, and I believe it has not usually been the practice for the Government to interfere to put a stop to a society merely because it disapproves of some of its proceedings. I have never concealed my opinion with regard to this society, and have taken every opportunity of stating my objections to it; so I did also to the Orange Lodge; and the noble Earl was, I believe, a member of an Orange Lodge; and still they were not interfered with. Now, the Precursor Society is a public society, free from all secret oaths; and all I will further say on that point, is, that although I sincerely disapprove of the Precursor Society, which was very well known to all parties, and throughout Ireland, as soon as the society was formed, yet I did not by any means think with the noble Earl that it would have been expedient for the Government to take any steps to put it down; indeed to any recommendation on my part to Government to come to Parliament with a proposition for putting down the Precursor Society, I had at that time, on constitutional grounds, the most insuperable objections. The noble Earl has alluded to certain phrases used by Mr. O'Connell at some meetings of that society. Now, the noble Earl has not always been very guarded in his own language, or very cautious as to his companions. In the year 1831, at a meeting in the county of Down, the noble Earl in the chair, a Mr. Cromelin talked of the time being come to drive the Papists from the land; again, in 1834, in a letter to the Protestants of Ulster, the noble Earl said that he knew their strength, their moral courage, and their numbers; and that the time might come when these might be important. Now, although the noble Lord did not actually talk of fighting, yet such a reference to their numbers, under the circumstances, exhibited something like an intimation that he would be disposed to use them. And again, in the north of Ireland, in the year 1834, the noble Earl indulged in equally strong language against the then Government, all of whom were equally obnoxious in his sight. There are still one or two points on which I wish to say a few words. I regret that I have found it necessary to go so much into detail, because, in the first place, such details are irksome to hear, and make it embarrassing for any one to speak with effect or with justice to himself, from having a constant occasion to refer to papers. Of the two points which I have still to urge upon your Lordships' attention, the first is, with regard to the administration of the Criminal Law in Ireland, upon which I have been attacked more than once, and I rest my defence of that part of the subject on the two measures I have introduced; one of which is, the establishing local prosecuting solicitors in Ireland. Now, it is a fact, that, up to the introduction of that system, many offences were compromised; and the result has been, to render the administration of justice throughout the sessions of Ireland most efficient; and the effect of this system will endure long after this party attack has been forgotten. The other point to which I wish to refer, is the constabulary force which is at this moment organized under one head. The bill for that purpose was passed the year after I went to Ireland; and it had engaged my earliest attention after my arrival. Certain alterations had been made in it in Committee of your Lordships' House, which, as I stated then, I did not think of advantage; but still I am bound to admit, that the measure works extremely well. Previous to that, the force was under four independent authorities in the four provinces of Ireland. The system of the constabulary was thus various, isolated, and ill-defined; but under the provisions of the new enactment, and the control of Colonel Shaw Kennedy, and his able successor, Colonel Macgregor, the constabulary of Ireland had been rendered in every way efficient. Previous to their formation, the troops in Ireland amounted to 19,000, and now there are only 15,000. The numerical addition to the constabulary was only 500 men, as the force previously amounted to 8,000 men; it is now 8,500, but the difference is most striking in their moral influence, in the perfection of their discipline. Some men seem to present a rare union of qualifications for the discharge of the duties entrusted to them, and such I believe to be the case of the present Inspector-General, Colonel Macgregor. After the resignation, by me much regretted, of Colonel Shaw Kennedy, I felt all the difficulty of choosing a worthy successor who would not be open to immediate objection from some quarter. I had known Colonel Macgregor long, both personally and by repute. I had seen him in the West Indies, and remembered his character there as a commanding officer. I had known him afterwards on duty in Dublin. He had then again gone on service to America, but I thought, when looking around for an officer to fill this post, that he united many qualities which peculiarly fitted him for the situation. I made the offer which was accepted, and after nine months experience of his conduct in that command for which I selected him, I believe there is not a second opinion as to his merits. I may well feel satisfied at thus having left behind me not only a superiorly organized force, but a most worthy head under whom the improved system must continue and prosper. Now I have gone through my legal and constabulary appointments, let us examine for a moment my distribution of clerical patronage. One of the most current clamours against the present Government is its supposed disregard to the interests of the Church. I have had the disposition of the Church patronage of the Crown in Ireland for nearly four years. Is there one of the noble Lords opposite who can find fault with a single act of mine in connexion with this subject? I observed the other day a paragraph in a Tory provincial paper, stating that, in the course of my Government, I had promoted thirty-six curates who had no other passport to my favour but their merits. I kept myself no account of the numbers, but it was with the most sincere desire to promote the efficiency of the Church, of which I am myself a member, that I considered each individual case as it came for my decision, and is it not something to have succeeded in making this so evident, that with all the disposition which cannot be denied to party attack, it has never been pretended that on this subject there has been cause for a single murmur? I am not aware, my Lords, that I have anything further with which to trouble you at present. Should any new subject be brought forward in the course of the debate, I trust that, according to the usual courtesy of your Lordships, I shall be allowed an opportunity for explanation in matters where I am personally concerned. With regard to the motion before the House, I must say, that the manner in which it has been brought forward, and the limitation of the inquiry to the period of my Government, oblige me to consider it as a direct attack upon the system on which I have administered the affairs of that country—an attack for which I confidently assert that the noble Earl has laid no sufficient grounds. And what support out of this House is it likely to receive, except from the agents of Orange intrigue? Where are the demonstrations of public opinion, which call for such an extraordinary proceeding? It would be natural to expect some sympathy between the two Houses. Where are the Commons thronging your Lordships' bar with articles of impeachment? Has any one dared even to make such a motion as that of the noble Lord in the other House? Why, when in a shape studiously devised so as to prevent that House from being called upon to pronounce any opinion upon it, the subject of these grievances was brought forward, of all the numerous party who coincided in the general views of the majority of this House, forty Members could not be found to listen to the oft told tale of the misdeeds of the Irish Government. Do not deceive yourselves, my Lords; if you accede to this motion, the effect must be to convince the people of Ireland, and to make a strong impression upon the people of England too, that you are about to take on yourselves the Executive Government of Ireland. Are you prepared for the consequences of such a step? It is not for me to impress upon your Lordships what these consequences may be. But in the much less serious point of how it may affect myself, it is possible that the result of this night's division may be to prove that I have not acted as a majority of your Lordships would have thought right. Whatever the effect of that decision may be upon my future position, it cannot at least deprive me of the pleasure I derive from the past, in the reflection that it has been granted to me to raise the political condition, to sustain the legitimate hopes of those whom my Sovereign had graciously committed to my charge. It has been my lot to live on terms of intimacy and friendship with many of your Lordships to whom I am politically opposed. I will not affect to be indifferent to your good opinion. It is more than probable I may have often erred; no one can be more sincerely aware of his manifold personal deficiencies, but even to secure your Lordships' approbation, or to avert your sentence, I would not change or modify the intention and tendency of any one act during my administration in Ireland. My conduct of affairs in that country is now the question at issue. Whatever this night's result may be, your Lordships' decision cannot deprive me of the gratitude of a long suffering but warm hearted people, nor of that, which alone I value more, the approval of my own conscience.

The Duke of *Wellington* did not think that the noble Marquess who had just resumed his seat had done justice to the noble Earl by whom the present motion had been brought forward, when he imparted to him any violent or party motives, for he thought he never heard a more moderate speech, on making a motion of this sort, than that of the noble Earl. He had stated clearly and dispassionately the points to which he wished to direct the attention of the House, and upon which he called upon the House to institute an inquiry, and there certainly was nothing in what he had said which exhibited anything of party inclination against the noble Marquess. The noble Marquess was, no doubt, well satisfied with his government in Ireland; and he must say, as the noble Earl by whom the motion was made had already said, that there was no charge against him personally; but what the noble Earl had really stated was, that a very great degree of crime had been apparent, and that murders had been frequent during his Administration. He believed the fact to be, that during the last year the average number of homicides throughout Ireland had been from two to three a day, or from 700 to 1,000 in the course of twelve months, and he said, that this fact alone, without adverting to the other topics which had been mentioned by the noble Earl, ought to be sufficient to induce the House to institute the inquiry which was sought, and to endeavour to ascertain whether there was not something in the jurisprudence—in the state of the law in that country—which required some remedial measure beyond any which could be adopted by the existing Government. The noble Marquess in his speech had reminded the House of what they had heard upon every occasion when this subject had been before discussed, that the case had always been as it now was.

That was rather a large mode of stating the case, however, and there was besides this difference between former times and the present, that they had not formerly a Government coming down to Parliament and telling them, that Ireland was in a state of tranquillity—that they had not a speech from the King on the Throne informing them of the same fact—and that they had not the satisfaction of seeing the Lord-lieutenant in his place in that House making a speech of some two or three hours' length, to prove that Ireland was in a state of perfect tranquillity, and in cases of murder, alleging, that the want of the discovery of the offenders was to be attributed to the conduct of his noble Friend sitting near him, and not to the inefficiency of the means employed by the Government. He must say, that the circumstance of the murders which had been committed, and of threats having been held out to a noble Lord connected with the county of Tipperary, together with the state of crime as it appeared from the returns presented to the House by the Government itself, would be a sufficient ground of inquiry. When they had had a discussion upon this subject a year ago, he ventured to point out to the House the difference between the returns made to this and to the other House of Parliament. The noble Marquess had made an able speech in reply to the observations which he had made, but he thought, that he had entirely failed in showing any sufficient cause for the existence of the difference. He had got in his hand a paper of the same description as that to which he had alluded, containing the return from 1837 to the end of the last year, and their Lordships would hardly believe, that in the returns made by the inspectors of prisons, and those made by the clerks of the Crown and the clerks of the peace, who made a return of the numbers of persons tried at the assizes and quarter sessions, there was in the year 1837 the difference between 14,804 and 22,241, and that the number returned in this year was 27,340. [Lord *Plunket:* The difference is in the return from the petty sessions.] He had allowed for the quarter sessions, and that fact alone, which he had stated, and which was not accounted for, and which he took in the face of the return made to Parliament, would be a sufficient reason for the inquiry which was proposed by his noble Friend. But there was another ground upon which he should press the necessity of granting the motion, for it appeared in a late discussion in another House, and in their Lordships' House this evening, that it was admitted, that there was a secret society existing in Ireland called the Ribbon Society; and it appeared to be stated, that several persons had been proved to be members of that society, bound by the same oath in different parts of the country; and this fact alone, which was admitted by the Government, was a sufficient ground for inquiry by this House into the state of the execution of criminal law in Ireland—to see how far the state of crime was influenced by the proceedings of this society, and particularly as to the mode in which certain persons were enabled to influence the members of that society. But there was still another view in which this question might be regarded, and which was highly important. It appeared, that the Government had known of the existence of this society for some time, and he should like to know whether they were aware of its members being bound by this oath, and if they were acquainted with the nature of that oath, he would beg to inquire how her Majesty's Ministers had put into the mouth of her Majesty a Speech from the Throne in which she was made to advert to the state of tranquillity of Ireland. He said, that that also was a ground for this inquiry. The noble Marquess had been pleased to say, that the noble Earl had made a personal motion against himself, and had thought proper to defend himself respecting the appointments which he had made during his Government in Ireland. There was no insinuation at all against the noble Marquess in this respect; but as the House had now got at the fact, and as it was admitted, that there was a secret society existing in Ireland, called the Ribbon Society, and as the noble Marquess had chosen to advert to his appointments, and to justify them, he should like to hear from the noble Marquess (he knew he had taken care never to appoint an Orangeman to to a situation—they were all sent away—there was no need of them)—whether he had taken care not to appoint any Ribbonman to any situation? He was not going to attack the appointments of the noble Marquess—that was not his practice; but when the noble Marquess came there to defend himself, he should like to go a little further than the noble Marquess seemed disposed to go. That, however, was not the question; but whether Ribbonmen, bound by a secret oath to perform certain acts, whether legal or illegal, should be appointed to situations? The noble Marquess had said a great deal upon the subject of the Precursor Society; but upon this he (the Duke of Wellington) knew nothing, and he should only like to know, when the noble Marquess talked so much of his appointments, whether he had appointed any Precursor? [The Marquess of *Normanby:* Never.]—And whether the Precursor, being a man who paid his shilling in order to bind himself to the repeal of the union, and as one of 60,000 fighting men, he had taken care not to appoint any of them? No charge was made against the noble Marquess, for he did not think that his noble Friend had said one word about the appointments in his speech; and he should have said nothing about it either, if the noble Marquess had not thought proper to advert to it himself; but all that had been done was to bring the case under the consideration of their Lordships, and under that of the noble Lord who had recently been appointed to fill the office lately held by the noble Marquess, in its true light.

The Marquess of *Normanby* said, that the noble Duke had put a question to him, and he hoped the House would allow him to answer it. The noble Duke had asked him, whether he had ever appointed a Precursor, and he answered that he had not. The noble Duke had also asked him a question, whether had he ever appointed a Ribbonman? and he thought that he need hardly answer a question which could scarcely have been asked seriously, and he thought that it was almost unnecessary for him to say, that he had never made such an appointment, if he was aware that the individual was a member of the society alluded to. He had taken every pains to find out whether the individuals he had appointed were members of that, or any other society of a similar description, and if he had discovered that they were, after he had appointed them, he should have removed them.

Viscount *Beresford* would be glad to know whether any members of the Catholic Association had been appointed to office by the noble Marquess?

The Marquess of *Normanby:* That society had ceased to exist long before I went to Ireland.

Viscount *Beresford:* What I allude to was not exactly the Catholic Association, but the National Association.

The Marquess of *Normanby*: If the noble Viscount will name any individual, I will answer him.

Viscount *Beresford:* Mr. Pigott.

The Marquess of *Normanby:* Mr. Pigott had ceased to be a member before he was appointed.

The Earl of *Charleville* was understood to say, that he had a painful and onerous duty to perform, because he stood before their Lordships to defend the conduct of the Lord-lieutenant of King's county, and the other magistrates who acted with him. The noble Marquess had stated, that conviction, trial, and active investigation, had taken place in almost every case. Out of four trials for murders in that county there had been only one conviction. Out of three cases of desperate outrage, in one of which a person had lost his life, and another had been made a miserable cripple for the rest of his days, there had been no conviction. There were also other trials in which no conviction had taken place. There was the case of Mr. Brock, who was killed by two men, one of whom had been a student of Maynooth, and was discovered some time after the offence was committed in a cabin in Leitrim, going by a false name. He was acquitted in consequence of a relation being upon the jury which tried him, the law officers of the Crown having neglected to challenge him. From the description of the noble Marquess, one would think that Ireland was a most happy and halcyon country, and that by some magic spell he had reduced it from a state of comparative outrage to one of comparative tranquillity. But, unfortunately for the noble Marquess, by the report of the Committee appointed to inquire into the state of Ireland in 1832, of which a colleague of the noble Marquess, Mr. S. Rice, was the chairman, it appeared that previous to that year there had been a great decrease in crime, and that quarrels arising out of religious differences of opinion were less frequent. But since that period, from the commencement of the reform agitation up to this day, there had been an increase in both cases. His noble friend had gone so amply into the state of other parts of Ireland that he would confine himself to King's county. The first outrage which he would notice was that upon the property of Sir W.

Smith in 1832, which could not have arisen from any hostility to him as a landlord, because he had no tenants, but it originated in the honest discharge of his duty as a judge and commissioner of King's county. No sooner was that outrage made known, however, than the people flocked around him (the Earl of Charleville), and offered every assistance in their power to bring the perpetrators of the outrage to justice, and a sum was subscribed amounting to 405*l.*, as a reward for the discovery of the offenders. Sir William Smith expressed the high sense he entertained of the conduct of the people on this occasion, and in allusion to the subscription, said the 5*s.* contributors were not the least pleasing amongst them. The next case to which he alluded was, the shooting at Lord Bloomfield's steward, and also that of Mr. Drought, a respectable gentleman who was returning home from church, and was shot at, as well as the Rev. Mr. Dunn. It was somewhat singular, that while 25*l.* was offered for the discovery of the person or persons who shot at these gentlemen, the same sum was offered about the same time for the discovery of the persons who shot a dog. The next case was that of a man named John Kennagh, who was murdered in consequence of a dispute arising out of his wish to marry a young woman, which was objected to by the man who waylaid and murdered him. Crime had considerably increased since 1832. By a return made up from reports on their Lordships' table he found that the number of prisoners committed in 1832 was 271; in 1833, 428; in 1834, 505; in 1835, 634; in 1836, 766. In Sligo, Tipperary, and Westmeath, an increase had also taken place. In the beginning of 1839—on the 1st of January—Lord Norbury was murdered; and as some observations had been made upon his conduct with reference to it both by the noble Marquess and a colleague of his elsewhere, he wished as briefly as possible to vindicate the course he had pursued. Immediately he heard of the murder he went towards the spot where it had taken place. He stated at the meeting of magistrates at Tullamore, that in passing through the town he had been met by a crowd of persons, who cried out, "He is dead, he is dead," and gave three cheers. Lord Morpeth said that the crowd who cried out "He is dead" were a drunken mob who had been turned out of a public-house; but the decided opinion of the gentleman, Captain Fox, who accompanied him, was, that the mob gave indications that they rejoiced in the murder of Lord Norbury. When they uttered the exclamation, "He is dead," he (Lord Charleville), who was riding in a cab, immediately pulled up and looked at them, but the moment he went on again they repeated the cry, "He is dead, he is dead," and the impression made on his mind, as well as on the mind of Captain Fox, was, that the people rejoiced in the murder of Lord Norbury. He knew that among a series of toasts which were drunk at a public-house that night there was this—"Let the man never lose either a finger or eye that shot Glendyn;" and similar toasts were drunk at other public-houses in the town. He met Mr. Brownrigg, the Government magistrate, near the spot where the murder was committed. He introduced himself to him, and said he was exceedingly glad he had come down to assist in the investigation, and that he and the local magistrates would very gladly co-operate with them. He took him over the grounds, and explained to him everything he knew of the circumstances in the most cordial manner possible. He invited him and Mr. Heely to reside at his house, instead of going to an inn, but having declined, he passed that night at Tullamore, where he called on them frequently, and communicated with them with the most perfect cordiality. In the morning he got some important private information, and in order to avoid the slightest appearance of jealousy, the first thing he did was to put his private and confidential letter into the hands of Mr. Brownrigg, requesting him to communicate it to the Government. When attending the inquest he put no question to the witnesses without taking the opinion of Mr. Brownrigg and Mr. Heely as to its propriety; when they parted, he stated that he would wait upon them at one o'clock the following day. But he was much surprised to find when he called that the prisoner M'Guire had been taken out of his cell and examined, without any communication with him or the other committing magistrate. He continued, however, to act with them till the prisoner was released; and he was only prevented from continuing to act with them upon receiving a letter to this effect, that it had been widely circulated in the town and in the market that he was the cause of the apprehension and detention of the prisoner, against the wish of the Government; thereby marking him out to the vengeance of the party, this information being circulated by the Government magistrates. In that country the Government, in the case of Lord Norbury, seemed anxious to smother all inquiry. He then thought it was better for the ends of justice that he should not interfere. On a former occasion he had stated that the steward, frightened by the sight of the murderer, had not given any information; and yet it was strange, that although the steward had given no alarm, some people returning, at the instant, from a funeral were apparently acquainted with the circumstance. The next communication he had with Mr. Brownrigg, who was at the head of the police in the province, was to beg for the assistance of a policeman, as he had information which he thought might lead to the discovery of the murderer. The application was forwarded to Dublin, and some time afterwards, undoubtedly, the policeman was forthcoming, but not until the person from whom he learned the facts had left the country. A meeting had been called by the High Sheriff in reference to the meeting of magistrates of King's county, which had been held subsequent to the murder of Lord Norbury, and to the requisition calling on the High Sheriff to convene that meeting, he found there were the signatures of a great number of Ribbonmen. In short, such was the state of things in Ireland, that day after day and week after week had passed away, and notwithstanding all the exertions which had been made, and the great amount of the reward which had been offered, the family of the murdered nobleman were still in uncertainty, and no evidence had been obtained to bring the assassin to justice. With respect to the pardons which had been granted by the noble Marquess, he wished to make a few observations. He had on a former occasion alluded to the case of Coghlan, and the noble Marquess had at that time pleaded total ignorance of the circumstances he had stated; but he held in his hand a return which showed that Coghlan had been convicted several times, and that he had been pardoned twice. Then came the case of Brown and M'Namara, who had been pardoned, although they had been guilty of the most atrocious crimes, and upon the strongest evidence of their guilt. He held in his hand a return of the convicts pardoned by the noble Marquess from February, 1837, to March, 1839. The first individual mentioned in that return was a person of the name of Burnett, who had received a free pardon on a medical certificate, but who had since been tried and transported. Then there was the name of James Smith, who had been pardoned on the 3rd of February, 1837, on a medical certificate, and who had also since that period been re-tried, convicted, and transported. In short, out of 104 convicts whose sentences had been commuted, and nineteen pardoned, on medical certificates, three of those pardoned had been again tried and transported since they obtained those pardons. Under such circumstances he hoped that Government would pause before granting any more pardons on medical certificates. He would not trespass further on their Lordships' time; but when he reflected on the state of Ireland, and the little security either to life or property which existed in that country, he could not but give his cordial support to the motion of the noble Lord who had brought this subject under their Lordships' consideration.

Lord *Rossmore*, having lived long in Ireland, and being well acquainted with the people of that country, felt himself called upon to make a few observations in reference to some statements which had been made during the course of the debate. On the part of the inhabitants, and particularly of the peasantry of King's County, he stood up to give the most unqualified denial to the observations which had been made against them in that House and elsewhere. He stood up to remove the brand which the noble Lord, the Lord-lieutenant of the county, had thought fit to fix upon the peasantry at a meeting which had been convened by himself, and he gave the most unqualified denial to the charge which had been brought against the inhabitants of King's County of having conspired to murder their landlords, and to effect any one object by private assassination. The noble Lord, the Lord-lieutenant of the county, had brought forward no facts to entitle him to make such a charge, for the case of Lord Norbury was not sufficient ground for such a sweeping condemnation. He defied any person to bring from the calendar one fact to warrant such a general charge against the peasantry of the country, or the inhabitants of Tullamore. He had lived long in the vicinity of that place, and he had kept up a constant communication with it, and he could say, from his own knowledge, that a more industrious, peaceful, and loyal people was nowhere to be found. As to the circumstances which had been stated by the noble Earl opposite to have occurred when he was passing through Tullamore, he must say, that he considered the noble Earl to have mistaken the cries to which he had alluded. He had received two letters on the subject, but before alluding to them more particularly, he wished to state, that he had been requested to invite the noble Earl to investigate the matter upon oath, and if the noble Earl did not choose to accept that invitation, then the inhabitants themselves would institute an inquiry, and publish the result throughout the empire. The letters alluded to the statement of the noble Earl, that he had heard on passing through Tullamore cries of "He is dead," from which the noble Earl concluded, that the people of that place exulted in the murder of Lord Norbury. But his informant stated, that no such cries had been uttered; that he was present when the noble Earl passed through, and that nothing of the kind could have taken place without his knowledge. Those who reproached the noble Marquess with doing nothing should recollect, that shortly before he took upon himself the Government of Ireland that country was in a state little short of civil war, and that ever since then it had been progressing towards convalescence. Where were the Orange processions now? Where were the disturbances which had regularly recurred every 12th of July? Where, too, were the rustic faction fights? They had all disappeared under a Government, which it was alleged, had done nothing to tranquillize Ireland. He gave the most unqualified denial to the allegation that the amount of crime had increased during the noble Marquess's administration of that country. What said the judges upon that point? Had they not in almost every county in Ireland congratulated the different grand juries upon the lightness of crime in the several calendars submitted to their notice? He called upon the noble Lords opposite to exercise the influence which they had over the Protestants of Ireland in soothing, not in exasperating, the differences which unfortunately distracted that country. There were two classes of Protestants in Ireland. The system of one class was to monopolize all patronage and privilege to themselves, and to exclude from it all their Roman Catholic countrymen. The system of the other class was to extend to all the privileges which they themselves enjoyed. He wished that the system of the latter was more generally adopted, as the system of the former, by adding fresh fuel to the inflammable materials already in Ireland, had a tendency to aggravate party animosities to a most frightful height, and to place in perpetual jeopardy the peace and prosperity of its inhabitants. When they were told daily, that Ireland was a country which the mariner ought to avoid—when it was dunned into their ears, that its inhabitants were cowards and assassins, and savages, worse than Turks and Hindoos—when they were denounced as aliens in blood, in language, and in religion, and were represented on that account to be unworthy of the privileges conferred upon the inhabitants of Great Britain, it became the House to take care that the parties so maligned did not recur to resistance, as their only refuge from insult, menace, and prosecution.

The Earl of *Donoughmore* wished to explain an expression of his, which had been the subject of much comment both in and out of Parliament. He certainly had given the noble Marquess credit for having carried the common law into execution with vigour during his administration of Ireland; but in giving the noble Marquess that credit, he had wished to contrast what he had then done with what had occurred three months afterwards. He had told the noble Marquess that the powers of the common law were not sufficient for his purpose, and that he would be obliged to come down to Parliament to ask it to arm him with additional powers. He had also recommended the noble Marquess to amend the Arms' Act. The noble Marquess had deemed his recommendation unnecessary. What was the fact? What had occurred within two months after his recommendation was given? In one short winter's day, at the end of January or at the commencement of February, he could not say which, Major Warburton had seized no less than 163 stand of unregistered arms on the banks of the Shannon, between Portumna bridge and Shannon harbour. He could assure their

Lordships that no opinions which he might be compelled by a sense of duty to express, either in that House or out of it, and that no calumnies by which he might be assailed in consequence of it, would ever prevent him from giving his humble assistance to any noble Lord to whom the Government of Ireland might be intrusted, in carrying the law fully and vigorously into execution. He asked the noble Marquess not to give him or his Friends any share in the distribution of the patronage of that country; but at the same time he called upon the noble Marquess not to give the sanction of his name to any more circular letters issued by Mr. Secretary Drummond, which were of a character highly offensive to the feelings of the magistracy of the country. He did not think that such a course was becoming the high situation lately occupied by the noble Marquess; and he must be permitted to say, that the noble Marquess had replied to the memorial of the magistrates with a great deal of bitterness and acrimony. He assured the House that in his own immediate neighbourhood he was informed by a police constable, that seventeen of his own people had unregistered arms in their possession, and he went out, and himself collected ten stands. It was indispensible that the Arms' Act should be amended; for not only must the unregistered, but also the registered, arms be called in, for the latter were lent out to persons who had no right to possess them. The noble Marquess had alluded to the language of Mr. Justice Crampton; but what, he asked, were the words of that learned gentleman at the Assizes of Clonmel? Mr. Justice Crampton there observed, that "it appeared to him that the mass of violence and bloodshed gave to the county a fearful pre-eminence to crime, and in the disregard of human life, not only above every other county in Ireland, but above every other part of the civilized world." That was the frightful picture presented by Mr. Justice Crampton of the state of Tipperary, where only a week ago the calendars for the north and south ridings exhibited not less than sixty-four accusations of murder. He could add, that in the assistant-barrister's court, in the same county, which was presided over by a most efficient officer, there had been during the last three months, sixteen people transported, and 384 persons sentenced to different periods of confinement. The assistant-barrister sat five months in this court in the course of the year, and very nearly as much crime went before him as before the judges at the common assizes. He would make one observation with respect to the answer given by the noble Lord to the memorial of the magistrates immediately after the murder of Mr. Cooper. In that memorial, it was represented that crime was increasing, that juries were acting under palpable intimidation; and that the Crown had given up the wholesome practice of challenging, and the magistrates called on the noble Marquess to amend the Arms' Act. The noble Marquess took a whole month to consider his reply, and then he informed the magistrates that it was necessary to institute adequate inquiries as to the evils complained of, and the immediate cause to which they were to be attributed; and soon afterwards the noble Marquess told the magistrates, that all their complaints were groundless, and that the country was progressing in tranquillity; and he added, that the Crown had not given up the right of challenge, but that the Crown Solicitor exercised it at his discretion. Those were the words of the noble Marquess, who told the magistrates, that by their expulsion of the cotter tenantry, and by the improper manner in which they had exerted their right of property, they themselves were the cause of all the mischief. He thought he should be able to show, that the noble Marquess had by his own acts falsified the very conclusions to which he had come, after deliberate investigation. Why, if the country was in a state of progressive tranquillity, why did the noble Marquess think it necessary to issue a special commission? In the interval between the murder of Mr. Cooper and that of Mr. O'Keefe, what was the state of Tipperary according to the returns on the table? In the course of these six months, not less than twenty-five homicides had been committed, and that was progressive tranquillity. Then the noble Marquess said, that the juries were not intimidated, but that they did their duty manfully. Why, then, he again asked, had a special commission been issued? He entirely agreed in one of the noble Marquess's observations, that no juryman ought to be put aside either on account of politics or religion; but but there was another description of persons which it was the noble Marquess's duty to have challenged—he meant the small publican. Upon this point some light appeared at last to have penetrated the noble Marquess's mind, for at the last Tipperary assizes, where there had been some capital convictions, though there were none at the preceding assizes, the sheriff of the county, a most excellent Roman Catholic, took care that these publicans should not be put on the jury. He trusted that the sheriff acted in this particular by the advice of the Government. He might mention, as another instance of the progressive tranquillity of the county, that on Sunday week a most barbarous murder had been committed on an old man of the name of Hanley, aged eighty-four years, within a mile and a half of Nenagh; and on the same night the house of a person of the name of O'Connor, situate but a short distance from Hanley's, was also attacked. And this was progressive tranquillity! It was almost impossible for the gentlemen of Tipperary to occupy the lower rooms of their houses, because they were there exposed to the attack of assassins. He held in his hand a letter from the rev. J. Beresford, who lived within a mile and a half of the boundary of Tipperary, in which the rev. Gentleman stated, that a shot was fired into his drawing-room the other evening, and carried away the top of the couch where his wife had been sitting, and where, if she had remained only five minutes longer, the shot must have passed through her. This, he supposed, was progressive tranquillity again! Before alluding to the appointments to the police force, he must say, that he thought some person had imposed on the confidence of the noble Marquess. He found in the police list, as a chief constable, a W. Slattery, a person whom the Governor of Ireland, being anxious, as he ought to be, for the proper organization of the force, ought not to have appointed to that situation. This Slattery kept a small dram-shop in the town of Tipperary, and having got into debt, had absconded from the place, for the purpose of concealing himself from his creditors. He had been intrusted with various sums of money by farmers, which he had not restored; and he asked their Lordships whether this was a proper person to appoint to the situation of chief constable of police? Another appointment to which he felt called on to express his objection was that of Dennis Welsh. He was also a small publican in Clonmel, and had been in the situation of a gutter agent—that was to say, a man who brought up voters to the poll. He had been fined over and over again for selling spirits at illegal hours, and three months before, he had, at the Sessions Court, sworn that no policeman ought to be believed on his oath. Even the people of Clonmel had turned this man's appointment as policeman into ridicule. There was one other appointment to which he felt bound to call their Lordships' attention. On the retirement of a meritorious officer, Major Carter of Nenagh, from the situation of stipendiary magistrate, a gentleman was recommended to the Government as his successor by a noble Lord opposite, and by Lord Bloomfield. They stated, that his title to the place consisted in his services, of which they gave the following representation—he had prosecuted to conviction in sixty-nine cases of murder of an atrocious description in Tipperary; and by his instrumentality alone thirty persons had been transported and seven executed, and he was at that time actively engaged in prosecuting to conviction, five people implicated in one of the worst murders ever perpetrated in Tipperary. The noble Marquess opposite acknowledged that the services of this gentleman were noted at the Castle; but said, that if he should be appointed, he could not be allowed to act as a stipendiary magistrate in the neighbourhood of his own residence, which was at Nenagh. His surprise was very great on finding, when he looked over the return of the stipendiary magistrates, that the vacant situation had been filled up by the appointment of a most gallant officer undoubtedly, but one who had performed no service in the police, and whose services could stand no comparison with those of the gentleman he had just alluded to—Mr. Brereton. The services of that gentleman were attested by Lord Bloomfield. It did turn out, most unhappily for the noble Marquess, that the gentleman who had been appointed to this situation was nearly connected in marriage with the learned Gentleman who was supposed to have a great share of the patronage of Ireland at his disposal. He only threw out the insinuation; most unfortunately for the noble Marquess that was the case; but upon graver grounds he had a right to impugn the appointment. Such was the state of that county, that the noble Marquess ought to have availed himself of the services of Mr. Brereton. Although the noble Marquess had made a rule, that he would not appoint a stipendiary magistrate to act in the neighbourhood of his own residence, he had not adhered to it in all cases. The noble Marquess might recollect a person of the name of O'Brien, who once kept a small apothecary's shop, and who had been appointed by the noble Marquess—first an inspector of police, next a pay-master, and then a stipendiary magistrate. The noble Marquess had placed this gentleman near his apothecary's shop to discharge his duties at Wychestown. But that gentleman had much more important duties to attend to when there was an election for the borough of Cashel. That gentleman was an undertaker for the return of that borough, and at every election, the services of Mr. O'Brien, late retailer, and now stipendiary magistrate, were indispensable to the noble Marquess. Really nothing was more painful to him than to make these observations, but a sense of duty impelled him; he did it with the greatest reluctance, and he had nothing more to say, except to thank their Lordships for their indulgence.

The Marquess of *Normanby* would say one word with reference to Mr. O'Brien. Till now he was not aware of the former profession of that gentleman, but a more efficient officer and a more excellent magistrate than Mr. O'Brien, or one better able to discharge the duties of his office, could not be named. With respect to Mr. Dennis Walsh, he rather thought the noble Earl was misinformed as to his appointment. It had not taken place when he (the Marquess of Normanby) left Ireland, nor had he any reason to believe that the appointment had since been made. With regard to Mr. Slatterley, he could not but remark that this was an instance of the extreme inconvenience that ensued from the practice of noble Lords holding back information from the Government that might be in their possession, and bringing it forward and discussing the personal characters of men in Parliament. The noble Earl might be misinformed. At all events, everything which he had heard of Mr. Slatterley was quite contrary to what had been stated of him by the noble Earl. He had no reason for supposing that Colonel Macgregor would have appointed him if there had been any legitimate grounds of objection against him. The noble Earl had criticised the reply sent by him (the Marquess of Normanby) to the magistrates of Tipperary; but he begged to say, that he had never stated that the crimes committed in that county were owing to the conduct of the landlords. It was addressed to the Lord-lieutenant of the county, in answer to the memorial by the magistrates, and was confided to his care; and, in point of fact, that inflammatory document, as it had been represented to be, had remained in the hands of the noble Earl till moved for in the House of Commons.

Viscount *Lismore* said, that as reference had been made to his having presided at a dinner given to Mr. O'Connell at Thurles, he begged to explain to their Lordships that when he was invited to preside, he replied, that he respected Mr. O'Connell for the advantage he had been the means of procuring for that country by the emancipation of the Catholics, and that he was most anxious to show him every respect in his power; but still he would not attend the dinner if it were attempted to countenance either the Precursor Society or the Repeal of the Union. He was thereupon assured that not a word would be said about either subject. The noble Earl had alluded to his recommendation of Mr. Brereton as a stipendiary magistrate. He (Lord Lismore) did so at the suggestion of Lord Bloomfield. At the same time, he begged to say, that Mr. Brereton was an old acquaintance of his, and he did not believe that there was a more useful or respectable gentleman in the country. He, however, understood that it was a rule of the Government in Ireland not to appoint any gentleman to such a situation in his own county, and he, therefore, no longer pressed for the appointment. One word with respect to the motion before their Lordships. He believed that this Committee of Inquiry would lead to bad consequences in Ireland. With respect to the great and important county to which he belonged, he was sure it would aggravate the evils that already existed there. It would excite questions which would never otherwise be raised, and would cause much anger and heart-burning among the people of Tipperary. He regretted, likewise, the feeling which had been evinced by the noble Earl who brought the motion forward towards the Roman Catholics. The noble Earl had accused them of a conspiracy against the lives, property, and religion of the Protestants, and had represented their clergy as promoters of sedition and abettors of crime, and by these accusations, was impeding and thwarting the efforts of those who sought to put an end to the agrarian outrages that had prevailed in the county of Tipperary for more than sixty years, and which, he would maintain, had been already in a great degree put down by the exertions and energies of the noble Marquess. The Roman Catholics were not abettors of crime. The Catholic people of Ireland were not conspirators against the lives and property of the country; and he wished that those who thought they were would not shut their eyes to the real causes of crime and misery in Ireland, but would, by one strong and universal effort, exert themselves to promote the welfare, not only of Ireland, but the united interests of Great Britain.

The Marquess of *Westmeath* supported the appointment of the committee, and grounded his support on the fact of twenty-six outrages having occurred in the county of Westmeath since the month of February. The noble Marquess quoted a letter from a priest to an hon. and learned Gentleman, recommending a repeal of the union, as proof of the existence of the riband conspiracy. He must complain, too, of the manner in which the remonstrances of the magistrates of Westmeath had been treated, and in many instances the penalties inflicted by them had been remitted by the Lord-lieutenant, in consequence of which, crime and outrage had increased. Notwithstanding what had been stated, he was convinced there were ribandmen in the police, as he held in his hand a notice which had been stuck on a police station in his neighbourhood, recommending "the bloody d—d Peelers" to provide themselves with coffins, for having turned a Roman Catholic out of their body. He would relate another instance of outrage in which a person had sent a man to fetch some ale, who had been attacked by a party of ruffians who broke all the jugs to pieces, and ill-treated the man. It was not always safe to give names, so he would give their Lordships the affidavit of blank, in the parish of blank, in the county of Westmeath, who, when at the chapel of so-and-so, heard the reverend Mr. Fuller say, that so-and-so had a gun. This information was particular enough, although some of their Lordships might not understand it. However, it would be all proved hereafter. The next case was that of a policeman in the county of Roscommon releasing a man from prison who had been committed by Lord Crofton. The man was interceded for by a Catholic priest. The misconduct was not punished. He mentioned these as a few out of a multitude of facts, to show that the Government of the noble Marquess was not thought the same of at that side of the House as the other. He concluded by giving his hearty concurrence to the motion.

The Earl of *Fingall*, as a Peer connected with Ireland, and belonging to that race which a noble and learned Lord, not then present in his seat, had designated as alien in blood to the English nation, could not allow the debate to close without offering one or two observations. He wished to state that, from his own observation as a resident in that country, he believed the condition of Ireland to be progressively improving, that property was increasing in value, agriculture advancing, industry becoming more general, and that, although great crime certainly prevailed—although the existence of conspiracies amongst the lowest orders could not be denied, the general condition of the country was nevertheless rapidly improving. He was satisfied that the noble Lords opposite, as well as his noble Friends near him, would bear him out in the statement, that the rate of the purchase of land in Ireland had considerably increased since the passing of the Roman Catholic Relief Bill. Even in Tipperary, which was represented as the most desperate part of the country, estates had recently been sold at a very high rate. Nay, he understood that the noble Marquess who had just spoken (the Marquess of Westmeath), and whose view of the condition of the country was so unequivocally bad, had lately become the purchaser of estates in Tipperary at a very high price.

The Marquess of *Westmeath:* I sold the half of the purchase shortly afterwards to Mr. Hindes, who has since been bullied out of the property in the manner described by my noble Friend.

The Earl of *Fingall* understood, that the noble Marquess had purchased the estate at a very high rate, and that he had since sold the half of it at an increased value. With respect to the proposition made by the noble Earl (the Earl of

Roden, for the appointment of a committee of inquiry, he should certainly vote against it, because he did not see what good could possibly result from it. The noble Duke (the Duke of Wellington) had stated, that one of the chief objects of the Precursor Society was to advocate the repeal of the union. He (the Earl of Fingall) was not a member of that society, and never should be; but he knew many members of it who did not approve of the repeal of the union, and who had joined the society upon the distinct understanding that it was not to be an association for the repeal of the union. He thought, that noble Lords would better consult the welfare of Ireland by consenting to pull together in the adoption of measures for its benefit, rather than by uniting in vague recriminations and general accusations against the Government.

Viscount *Melbourne* said, that although this was a subject of very great importance, admitting of the introduction of almost every topic, great and small, from grave matters, which affected the whole state of society, down to the appointment of a policeman, and therefore, might lead to a very wide field of remark, and observation, and expatiation, still the question itself appeared to him to be very clear, very short, and very simple. The case involved in the debate, had already been very distinctly stated on both sides, as well by the noble Earl who introduced the motion, as by his noble Friend the Marquess of Normanby, whose very able speech was in his mind most definite, most clear, and most satisfactory. After this it did not appear to him to be necessary, that he should trouble their Lordships with more than a very few observations. He owned he was a little surprised at the speech of the noble Duke, (the Duke of Wellington.) He considered the speech a very bold speech, one of the boldest he had ever heard in any House of Parliament. The noble Duke said, that there was no offence in the noble Earl's motion—that it contained nothing, implied nothing, to which the government could object—in short, that there was no inculpation, no condemnation in the motion. Now, in his (Lord Melbourne's) estimation, not only was there inculpation—not only was there condemnation in the motion, but it was a pure censure and nothing else upon the Government. Because there was not one of their Lordships, from the noble Lord who opened the debate down to the noble Earl who last spoke—there was not a man who had taken a part in the debate, or who had listened to it in silence, who expected anything to result from this proposed inquiry—who thought that it would teach them anything—who thought they could learn anything by it—who thought that anything would be discovered or found out in consequence of it. There was not one of them who expected or supposed, that when such an inquiry terminated, he would know anything more about the state of Ireland, and the remedies to be applied to it, than he knew at present. Good God! an inquiry into the general state and condition of Ireland! An inquiry into the conduct of the Government would be something. That would have some meaning; there, possibly, something might be discovered. But at this time of day, considering how much they had inquired—how much they had investigated—how much they had examined—how minutely they had looked into the subject—how many hours they had devoted to it—how many committees of inquiry had sat—how many books had been published—how many reams of paper had been exhausted in the compilation of reports on the subject—considering all this, how could their Lordships expect to discover anything from instituting a new inquiry upon the general state and condition of Ireland. In the years 1824 and 1825 they had two committees of both Houses of Parliament sitting for two whole Sessions, examining every body, and inquiring into everything. Since then other committees had been repeatedly appointed in which the condition of Ireland had been amply considered. They had had committees upon tithes, committees upon education, and committees upon various other subjects, all of them more or less involving an inquiry into the general state of the country, and into the general feeling of the people. Last of all, they had had a most complete local inquiry carried on by the commissioners appointed to prepare the way for the introduction of the new Poor-law Bill, and who had gone most minutely into the whole state of the country, into the whole condition of its agricultural population, into the whole of the effects which its peculiarities had upon the character and feeling of its inhabitants. Was not every one well aware of what the misfortunes—what the crimes of Ireland were? The nature of the remedies proper to be applied was a very different thing. That which was to change the minds of a people—to alter the feelings of a people—was not so easily devised? but their Lordships were just as ripe to consider and frame these remedies as they could be if they were to consume a Session or two Sessions in such an inquiry as the noble Earl's motion would lead to. It was generally apprehended that the crimes of Ireland arose from conflicts about the tenure of land. He had no doubt if the Committee were granted, that the noble Earl would be able to establish all the facts he had stated. No doubt the outrages to which the noble Earl had alluded were perfectly true. But when the inquiry had been gone into—what then? How would their Lordships be wiser? How would they be better able to determine in what manner they should act. It was impossible to deny that there was unfortunately in Ireland, and had been for many years past—from causes originating long ago—a disregard for human life, and there was unquestionably not the same desire to discover a murderer in that country as there was in this. Comparisons were often drawn between the two countries in that respect; but he thought that in England they should be careful not to plume themselves too much or too hastily upon the point, that murderers were not allowed to pass unsought for and undiscovered. In Ireland it was to be accounted for, because unhappily the sympathy of the people was with the cause of the murderer—because there was a notion of right connected with the murder. How that feeling originated he knew not—whether from the defect or fault of the old laws of the land, or from some undefined but strong and immovable impression in the minds of the people about the original rights of property, he could not say. From whatever cause it originated, it was difficult, most difficult, to cure. But their Lordships would please to recollect that in this country there was a great anxiety to discover a murderer, and great indignation expressed against murder, because in general there was no sympathy with the cause of the murderer. But when, as sometimes happened, they came to murders which interested the feelings of the great mass of the people—murders, for instance arising out of strikes in the great manufacturing districts—there was pretty much the same difficulty in obtaining evidence, and in procuring co-operation for the discovery of the murderer, as in Ireland. Their Lordships all remembered—at least he (Lord Melbourne) perfectly well remembered—the murder of Mr. Ashton, at Stayley-bridge, in 1832—a murder not very unlike some of the atrocious murders that had occurred in Ireland. The perpetrator of that murder had never to this hour been discovered, because the people symphathised and felt with the persons by whom it was committed. He apprehended that the noble Duke had considerably exaggerated the number of homicides in Ireland when he said, that they amounted to 700 a year. He believed that 230 or 260 was the maximum number. Quite enough, God knows, but still trifling as compared with 700. Then the noble Duke stated that the existence of a riband conspiracy in Ireland, which had never been admitted before, was another ground for inquiry. Instead of never being admitted before, he believed that the existence of such conspiracies had never been denied before. He had never heard it denied that there were ribandmen in Ireland nor, that there had been for years and years, secret societies, persons binding themselves together by secret and unlawful oaths for the attainment of objects not recognised by the laws. The existence of such societies had been one of the great misfortunes — one of the great curses of the country. The noble Duke had adverted to a murder they all regretted—the murder of Lord Norbury. They all knew, that, perhaps, viewing it philosophically and strictly in reason, there was no greater crime in the murder of Lord Norbury than in the murder of any other man; but, at the same time, they knew, that that was not the constitution of human nature; they knew, that the death of a man of the rank, station, and title of Lord Norbury created ten times as much impression as the death of a subordinate person; but that feeling would not prevail in that House; he was sure, that was the last assembly where it would be entertained. He thought the noble Duke went a great way in saying, that the mere fact of that murder being undiscovered justified the instituting and establishing this commission of inquiry; and when the noble Duke said, that it was no condemnation or attack on the Government, he surely forgot the whole of the speech of the noble Lord who moved for the committee and which went to condemn his noble Friend (Lord Normanby) for not having administered the law; to condemn him for conduct respecting the Precursor Society, in short, to condemn him for the whole course of his administration, and for the whole policy he had pursued. It was said, that "those who had gone before his noble Friend had administered the law boldly, and had grappled with crime." He remembered, that the noble Lord who now eulogised that Government, had formerly charged it with want of energy, and with great partiality, in the same manner, as he now thought proper to charge his noble Friend with those faults. The noble Earl said his (Lord Melbourne's) noble Friend, by not taking measures to put down the Precursor Society, had encouraged it. What could be said of Lord Liverpool's Government? He had recognised the Roman Catholic Association; and had brought in a bill to put it down, that bill entirely failed; and because the Government of that period had not immediately attempted stronger measures for that purpose, were they to be considered as adopting and acting with, and approving of all the acts of that association. The noble Lord said, that the Precursor Society was established by a gentleman who was a great stay and support of the present Government. Unquestionably, the Government had received very efficient support from that learned Gentleman. He had sometimes been asked if he would not repudiate and reject that support. Most certainly not. It was the business of a Minister of the Crown to obtain support, not to drive it from him, without sacrificing a principle. He did not think that the hon. and learned Gentleman in question had given the Government very efficient support by establishing a Precursor Association. He must own he wished he had taken other means. There was nothing, in his opinion, which had tended more to alienate those who were well disposed to the Government in this country than some of the proceedings of the hon. and learned Gentleman, and the opinion that in those proceedings he was closely connected with the Government, an opinion, which was entirely false, but had been made a source of considerable weakness. At that period of the night, he would not go farther into any of the topics that had been urged in the course of this debate. He was against this committee of inquiry, because, as he had said, he thought there was nothing to be learned by it, because he thought it was not in the slightest degree required, because he thought they were already in possession of all the materials they possibly could have, of all the facts that were necessary for being fully informed on the subject; whatever was the object in view, whether a simple improvement of the present law, whether the introduction of new laws, still no further inquiry was required; they were in possession of all the information which they could obtain by any inquiry into which they might enter. He was against it, because it was a direct censure on his noble Friend and on the Government with which he had acted. It was no light censure and would not be attended with light consequences. He was unwilling to call in question the highest prerogative of the Crown—that of dispensing mercy. Upon a great case shown it was absolutely necessary — it might be wise and prudent—to enter into the consideration of the manner in which the prerogative had been exercised, but in general, all wise and prudent statesmen had as much as possible kept such questions out of Parliament; they had always considered it imprudent to meddle with them. They heard nothing but statements of pardons which ought not to have been granted, of sentences which ought not to have been commuted, of punishments which ought not to exist, and complaints generally upon the whole exercise of the prerogative of sovereignty in Ireland; in fact, the motion was directed against his noble Friend's administration, and against the prerogative of the Crown, and was, in the highest degree objectionable.

Lord *Brougham* said, he should have felt it necessary even if the noble Viscount had not put the question on the footing which, in the exercise of his judgment, he had thought fit to place it—he should have felt it to be a duty to himself, on the present occasion, when he was about to vote against those with whom he had hitherto been in the habit of acting, and in favour of those with whom he so widely differed on most subjects, and especially under circumstances which might cast a doubt on the nature and tendency of his vote—he should, he must repeat, have felt it to be a duty to himself as well as their Lordships to state the grounds on which his vote would be given. In stating these grounds shortly and simply in order to get at the essence of the question, he should at once proceed to consider the statement given by the noble Viscount of the object of the motion of the noble Earl. Nothing could be more different from its real object than the one ascribed to it by the noble Viscount; it was not for a vague inquiry, without object and endless voyage, without compass or chart over the vast ocean of Irish affairs, but a Committee of Inquiry as to the state of crime in Ireland, in which there was nothing vague or indeterminate, and he would do the speakers on the other side the justice to say, that however much he might differ from them, yet in their speeches they had strictly confined themselves to the terms of the motion. He would not shelter himself behind the base pretence that he was not imputing blame to any one—as he was voting on known constitutional and parliamentary grounds. He considered, then that a *primâ facie* case for inquiry had been made out—a case that required an answer—and, rather than at once proceed to pass a censure, he must first have further information upon the question. The real question was, whether Ireland, as regarded crime and outrage, was, as each view of the case had been that night insisted upon in different parts of the House, progressing, stationary, or retrograding. It was as difficult to understand that return as if it had been drawn in a language of which he had been entirely ignorant. One word with regard to an observation of the noble Lord, the Lieutenant of the county of Tipperary, who had said, that the law had been enforced in Ireland as vigorously as was possible, but that it had been found ineffectual in checking the progress of crime, and that, therefore, a new law was required. He did not concur in that view; he did not think that a new law was required; he did not think either that a law was called for in order to put down the Precursor Society. It might be a very foolish, a very ridiculous, a very mischievous, a very innocent, or a very meritorious society; it was, at all events, legal, and he should strenuously oppose any attempt to put it down. As to that society, said the noble and learned Baron, I disapprove highly of it, and for this reason, that it holds out as the meaning of its title that it is a prelude to the agitation for the repeal of the union. Its name implies its origin and signifies its object. It is preparing or precursoring another state, and what that state is which it shall be expanded or blown into, whether it is likely to become a full grown vermin, when it leaves the present chrysolite condition; whether it will ever come into that state, when it will be not only offensive, but that it will sting, can be best ascertained by attending to the conditions on which the repeal of the union is to be demanded. "If," say its founders, "we can succeed by means of two million of shillings, and by our numbers of fighting men, sometimes counted at 14,000, sometimes at 2,000,000, and sometimes at 100,000; but if by our men and our money, we can succeed in accomplishing the objects for which our society is founded, then you shall hear no more of the repeal of the union." Now, what where these objects? To add fifty or sixty to the number of Members for Ireland, and to take away an equal number from England, as well as to carry universal or an extended suffrage, annual Parliaments, and vote by ballot, all of which Parliament and Government have solemnly resolved not to grant. Does any man, then, in his senses—does any one of the two millions of precursors think, that the conditions on which they consent to refrain from seeking a repeal of the union can be complied with? It means, then, a society for the repeal of the union. Therefore, I disapprove of it—therefore, I am against it—therefore, I will use all lawful means, by argument, by influence, by debate, here and elsewhere, to oppose it. But why do I not approve of a law to put it down? Because it would be unconstitutional and against the liberty of the subject. Though I think the association a bad one, and established for bad purposes, I am not disposed to nurse it (impotent and ridiculous as it has hitherto been), into importance by legislating against it. The noble and learned Lord went on to remark, that an odious, false, groundless, and inconsistent contrast had been instituted by some of those who supported the noble Marquess (the Marquess of Normanby) that night between the noble Marquess's administration, and those of his predecessors. It was the business of the noble Viscount (Viscount Melbourne) to take any support which he could obtain, without making any unbecoming sacrifices; but if he (Lord Brougham) were in his position, he could figure to himself nothing more distasteful, nothing more hatefel, nothing more disgustful, to his feelings, his honour, and his principles, than to have received such support on the ground on which it wsa given. Now, what was the ground? Why they said "we oppose Lord Grey and Lord Brougham (these were the two names selected); we did all we could to unseat them; we finally succeeded with the help of a court intrigue, and we support the same Lord Melbourne whom we opposed before, because we know his Government to be utterly incapable of having proposed or carried the disgraceful Coercion Bill of 1833. That was the avowed ground of this support, and yet that very bill came out of the department of his noble Friend (if he would allow him to call him so), for being incapable of supporting which he was now placed in contradistinction to his former colleagues. He came now to the reasons on which he should give his support to the motion. By the constitution of England, mercy was not left to the arbitrary caprice of the monarch to be indulged in as any other caprice. It was a part of the duty of the monarch, and intimately and inseparably mixed up with the administration of justice itself. They could not be separated. Justice without mercy degenerated into cruelty; and mercy, in like manner, if not guided and controlled by justice, became absolute folly, or still worse, partial favour. With respect to the number of cases in which pardon had been granted, it was not pretended, that there had been in each instance communication with the judge who tried the case. The number of these cases, was, he believed, 284, excluding all cases tried at quarter sessions. Now, in the county of Tipperary, he believed, there were 400 cases of persons tried at quarter sessions who had been pardoned, or whose punishment had been mitigated. in no one of which there had been a reference to the judge by whom they were tried. In the vast number of these cases the effect of the pardon was to remit the punishment altogether, without communication with the judge by whom they had been tried. With whom communication had been held it was not for him to say, but he thought it was for their Lordships to inquire. He had the honour of a seat on the judicial bench for some time, and he had communication with some of the most distinguished persons who now presided over the administration of justice; and he knew from personal communication with those learned and reverend personages, that very great alarm and disquietude had been occasioned in them by these proceedings. He knew that in conjunction with their feeling of the propriety of extending the mercy of the Crown, there was a strong persuasion of the intimate connection between the exercise of mercy and the administration of justice. They expected, too, that an inquiry should be made in that, the highest court in the kingdom, whenever the subject was brought before them. And was it not brought before them? Could they flinch from their duty? The statement of the noble Earl—the statements respecting the counties of Tipperary, and Westmeath, and King's County—would of themselves make it difficult to flinch from the inquiry. But it was utterly impossible, after the speech of the noble Viscount, who said, that this was a case made out, or affected to be made out, against the Government of Ireland on account of the abuse of the prerogative of mercy. Consider what the case was. He would assume for the present, and his noble and learned Friend (Lord Plunkett) need give himself no trouble to take notes for the purpose of answering, for he would assume, that in every particular case in which the prerogative of mercy was exercised by his noble Friend in his progress through the kingdom, where he was receiving so many tributes of applause, and so many testimonies of the respect and affection of the Irish people — that in every one of those cases, to the number of two or three hundred — he believed two hundred and eighty odd — in which he had liberated individuals, his noble Friend had made, previously, deliberate and accurate investigation. He would admit, in the second place, that the noble Marquess had made inquiry in the proper quarters, that he had inquired of the judge who tried, whether that judge were the chairman of quarter sessions, the assistant barrister, or the judge of assize. He would admit, that in every individual instance, inquiry had been accurately made of the judge who tried and sentenced the prisoner. He would admit, that in each case, the gaoler and turnkey, who had communication with the prisoner, during his confinement, had borne testimony to the good conduct of the party. And, lastly, he would admit, that there was not one of these prisoners, whose case was not a case for mercy; and in doing this, he believed he made very large admissions. [Lord *Plunkett* hoped his noble Friend, would abide by them.] Yes, he had no wish to be released from them, and the hand of the clock would not go over three minutes before his noble and learned Friend would see, that he had no desire to escape from them. He knew he made very large admissions—admissions, he believed, as inconsistent with the real state of the facts as could possibly be. But there was one thing necessary to justify the exercise of the prerogative of mercy which he could not admit, which, if his noble and learned Friend could prove, would at once please him, which would change his opinion, prevent his vote, and restore him to the society of his noble and learned Friend on this occasion. His noble Friend had the means of silencing him, and of cutting short his labour, and that of their Lordships. Let it be proved to him, or asserted—for he would take his noble and learned Friend's mere assertion in the matter—that there were no other prisoners in any other part of Ireland who equally deserved to have their cases investigated, and to be made subjects for the exercise of the prerogative of mercy. [*A laugh.*] Let not his noble Friend treat the matter lightly He would not laugh many minutes longer, or imagine that it was a light matter. As a friend to justice, as a friend of the just prerogatives of the Crown, and of this its most delicate and most valuable prerogative of the Crown, as a friend of the monarchy, and as one who wished to see monarchy continue to be the government of this country, because he believed it secured peace within and respect from without, he protested against the exercise of this prerogative, unless some new circumstances had subsequently transpired, or the sentence had been too severe, or had been improperly given. Let the fullest meed of popular applause greet the arrival, the sojourn, and the departure of the noble Marquess, he had not a word to say against it; but let not the prerogative of the Crown be used—be abused—be perverted—nay, more, be prostituted—through caprice, or, what was worse still, through interested motives, for the mere purpose of securing a few elections. Mercy was one of the brightest prerogatives of the Crown, but at the coronation it was sworn to be exerted in conjunction with justice; but once let it be recklessly administered, or prostituted to party purposes, and it became tainted at the source, and we had no longer either mercy or justice. But it was a painful subject to see the viceregal office degraded in this manner, and the functions of it so exercised. It was a painful subject, and he did not wonder that his noble and learned Friend (Lord Plunkett) had not thought fit to take part earlier in this debate, lest he should be obliged to take a view of these enormities; he was not surprised to find, that *spectaculo averteret oculos, ne tantæ majestatis deformationem aspiceret.* He had now fully and fairly stated the case; and he thought it most manly on his own part, and most becoming such of their Lordships as agreed with his views on this subject, that both he and they should state fully and fairly, that they thought a *primâ facie* case for inquiry was made out. This he trusted on inquiry might assume an altered face, still he hoped and trusted that for the reasons he had given, their Lordships would agree to the motion.

Lord *Plunkett* said, though he rose perhaps with less confidence than the noble and learned Lord who last but one addressed their Lordships, he hoped, before he sat down, to be able to give a satisfactory answer to the chief points of his speech. Upon one side it was avowed, that censure was not intended upon the noble Marquess; upon the other side it was disavowed; and yet, where parties were disagreeing so much with each other, were they to form a majority which was to affect the Government? If they did so, it would not be creditable to the character of that House. As to the noble Earl who proposed the motion, he wished to refer to opinions expressed by him in February, 1825. [*Laughter*] He did not know that there was a statute of limitation against such references. In the month of February, 1825 the noble Earl who brought forward the motion contended for the necessity of adopting decisive measures for the purpose of pulling down the late association, and that he declared it was not by prosecutions of this or that person that this was to be done, as they only tended to increase iritation.* The noble Earl at that time declared, that some more stringent measure than prosecutions should be adopted. Now, however, the noble Earl made it a charge against the Government, that they had not adopted the method of prosecutions. The noble Earl on like grounds, in 1826, charged the Marquess Wellesley's Government with being weak and puerile, and declared, that it was the disgust of the Protestants and the contempt of the Catholics.† The next statement to which he would take leave to refer, was made by the noble Earl in July, 1832, and speaking of the appointment of the Marquess Wellesley to the Lord Lieutenancy of Ireland the noble Earl said, "It was formerly deemed necessary to appoint men of experience and ability to conduct the affairs of Ireland, and he lamented that these qualities were not to be found in the noble Marquess."‡ Now he begged to remark, the noble Earl was not entitled by any station or qualification he might hold to pass such an opinion upon one of the greatest statesmen that ever adorned this country—a man distinguished at home and abroad in places where the noble Earl's name was never heard—a man the memory of whom would ever be cherished by his country. On subsequent occasions the noble Earl had objected to the Reform Bill, the Education Bill, and the Procession Bill, and designated all those measures as means by which to drive Protestantism out of Ireland. The inference he drew from these statements was, that the noble Earl would repeal the emancipation Bill, and all those measures which Parliament in its wisdom had passed. He did not think either his noble and learned Friend (Brougham) or the noble Duke opposite (Wellington) would join the noble Earl in those principles. But the noble Earl had suggested no measures to be adopted. Indeed, none had been suggested, except by the noble Duke, with respect to ribandism. The amount of ribandism had been overstated, and he was of opinion, that ever since 1798 the principle of ribandism, or secret associations, persons sworn, and all the machinery connected with ribandism, had never entirely been taken away; but he could state, as far as his own observation had gone, there was not any insurrection or movement in contemplation. When he spoke of the tranquillity of Ireland he spoke of it in that sense; at the same time he was quite willing to admit, that the system of ribandism ought to be carefully watched, and that if persons were found applying the machinery which existed, they ought effectually to be dealt with, and the thing be put down. He now came to what he conceived to be the view of the argument of his noble and learned Friend (Lord Brougham). His noble and learned Friend had said, that justice and mercy were so essentially and intimately connected, that mercy was to be considered as part of justice, and that unless it was so, it was not mercy; and he then added, that the coronation oath, which bound the Sovereign to administer justice with mercy, did not mean it should be administered at the discretion of the Crown, but on certain fixed and settled principles, and this his noble and learned Friend said, was the settled constitution of the realm. Now, if he was not mistaken, until a very late period, the accession of George 3rd, it was the regular course, on the accession of a new monarch to the Throne, that an Act of Grace was passed for all prisoners, with certain exceptions, and therefore he should be glad to know when that principle of the constitution, for which his noble and learned Friend contended, arose. His noble and learned Friend, in arraigning the exercise of the prerogative by the noble Marquess near him (Normanby), had relied only on one proposition, and that proposition had been known to his noble and learned Friend in 1837. But did his noble and learned Friend then arraign the noble Marquess for the exercise of the prerogative—an exercise which his noble and learned Friend now considered to involve such acts of delinquency that he felt it his duty to arraign it? It was for his noble and learned Friend, then, to explain why, in 1837, he gave his unqualified approbation to the course of conduct pursued by the noble Marquess. Suppose the noble Earl opposite should succeed in his present motion, which he admitted to be a vote of censure, he begged to ask him what course his noble and learned Friend would then follow? Had he any measure to propose, or was he willing to adopt the propositions of others? Was he willing to commit all the Friends with whom he had hitherto acted, and to surrender all the principles and opinions which he had advocated with such transcendant ability in the best days of his life. Was he willing to wait on the issue of what might be done by those with whom to-night he had allied himself? He could not consider this motion in any other light than that of a party proceeding. What course, he must inquire, was intended for the public good from this most inexplicable coalition of persons of opposite opinions? Seeing no result could follow from it, and that the only object of it was the removal of Ministers, he must repeat it was, he would not say, a factious, but a party motion. He, however, did not believe the intelligent people of England and Ireland would be disposed to join in any party proceeding of the kind; and he sincerely grieved, that his noble and learned Friend should be willing to incur the consequences of such a coalition, and to sacrifice the glories of his former life for the dearly-purchased triumph of to-night; and he would caution the noble Duke opposite (Wellington), and those noble Lords who were disposed to co-operate with his noble and learned Friend on this occasion; not to count too confidently on the continuance of that support, for they might rest assured, his noble and learned Friend would repay himself with usury for the use he had lent himself to, and would say with the poet—

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* Hansard (New Series), vol. xii., p. 29.

† Vol. xvi., p. 1232.

‡ Vol. xiii. (Third Series), p. 1190.

> "Qui te nunc fruitur, credulus aurea."

Lord *Brougham*, in explanation said, that in 1837 he was prepared to have urged the same point he had argued to-night on the question of the prerogative, and had actually conversed with two of the most learned persons in the country on the subject; he had not used one word to-night which he had not used in that conversation fifteen months ago. He denied, that he had supported the motion as a vote of censure, for the House had not yet the materials for censure; he had, however, said, there was a *primâ facie* case of blame, and that he hoped on inquiry that case might be found groundless.

The Marquess of *Normanby* could not thank the noble and learned Lord for the forbearance he had displayed. Though the noble and learned Lord might have conversed on the subject alluded to in 1837, yet so far from having mentioned it in debate, the noble and learned Lord had then defended his conduct without reserve, and he had in a publication entitled *Notes on Irish Affairs*, congratulated him on having successfully followed the policy of Lords Wellesley and Anglesey. However, he was not afraid to go to a verdict of his country on the manner in which he had been attacked on this occasion.

Lord *Brougham* observed, that the publication to which the noble Marquess had just alluded, had reference solely to the following out of the policy of Lords Anglesey and Wellesley, in not making that invidious distinction which had been drawn between different classes of Her Majesty's Government in Ireland by former Administrations. With regard to the extent to which the prerogative of mercy had been pushed in Ireland, he looked upon it as an ultra-barbarism. When George 4th went to Edinburgh he never dreamt of doing such a thing, neither did he do so upon his visit to Dublin. It was reserved for the representative of Royalty to do that which Royalty itself would not have undertaken.

The Earl of *Winchilsea* gave his hearty concurrence to the motion of his noble Friend, uninfluenced by one particle of party feeling. He grounded that concurrence on the frightful state of crime which prevailed in Ireland. No one had attempted to deny the existence of a fearful organization in that distracted country. The noble Marquess himself had admitted it, and admitted that he could not state the object for which it had been formed. This single fact furnished to his mind abundant ground for the inquiry. It was not at all his object to pass any vote of censure upon the noble Marquess; he considered, however, that at least a *primâ facie* case had been made out of the necessity of instituting such an inquiry, with a view to ascertaining the causes of this frightful state of demoralization. There was one point of the noble Mover's statement to which no reply whatever had been offered by the noble Marquess, and that was with reference to the island of Achill. Had the noble Marquess extended to the Protestant population of that island the protection which they had a right to expect at the hands of the Government, it was highly probable that the life of an unfortunate murdered man might have been saved.

The Marquess of *Normanby* stated, that Mr. Cruise, a stipendiary magistrate, had been directed by the Government to proceed to the island of Achill, upon the information of the disturbed state of the island reaching them.

The Earl of *Roden* briefly replied, explaining, that his accusation with reference to the transactions at Achill was, that, until six months after the application was made, no notice whatever was taken of it by the Government.

Their Lordships divided:—Content 63; Not-Content 58—Majority 5.

List of the CONTENTS.

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Dorset
Wellington
Buckingham.
MARQUESSES.
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Abercorn
Bute
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Thomond
Cholmondeley
Westmeath
Ormonde.
EARLS.
Winchilsea
Abingdon
Haddington
Galloway
Kinnoull
Aberdeen
Dartmouth
Tankerville
Harrington
Digby
Courtoun
Roden
Mountcashell
Clare
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Donoughmore
Limerick
Charleville
Verulam
Bradford
Falmouth
Ripon
Brecknock.
VISCOUNTS.
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LORDS.
Colville
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Cowley
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List of the NOT-CONTENTS.

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Oxford
Thanet
Cowper
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VISCOUNTS.
Melbourne
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Falkland
Ebrington
Duncannon
Lismore.
BISHOPS.
Hereford
Durham
Ely.
LORDS.
Cottenham
Holland
Barham
Langdale
De Mauley
Foley
Sudely
Saye and Sele
Berners
Vaux
Hatherton
Wrottesley
Dinorben
Carew
Lilford
Poltimore
Byron
Plunkett
Kinnaird
Montfort
Gardner
Hill
Glenelg.

Paired off.

AGAINST.	FOR.
Vernon	St. Vincent
Shrewsbury	Carnarvon
Belhaven	Eglintoun
Sligo	Harrowby
Lansdowne	Aylesbury
Rosebery.	Eldon.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Thursday, March 21, 1839.

MINUTES.] Bill. Read a second time:—General Cemetery.

CAPITAL PUNISHMENTS IN CANADA.] Mr. *O'Connell*, seeing the right hon. Gentleman the Under-Secretary to the Colonial Department in his place, would take the liberty of repeating a question to him, which he had been already asked, and which was whether from any information received by the government, it appeared that the capital executions in Canada were about to cease?

Mr. *Labouchere* said, that dispatches had been received from Sir John Colborne and from Sir George Arthur, and that both of those gallant officers stated that they had great satisfaction in being able to inform the Government that it would not be necessary to carry the capital punishments any further.

HOUSEHOLD SUFFRAGE.] Mr. *Hume* said, that in rising to submit his present motion, he hoped that the House would consider it to be as it appeared to him one of great importance which it was necessary they should soon entertain. He had endeavoured, though in vain, in the course of last Session, to obtain an opportunity of introducing this question to the House. It was one which he had been most anxious should have been considered in the last Session, because if the House had then entertained the principle of household suffrage, he was satisfied that the very general demand for universal suffrage which had lately been made by the working classes, might have been avoided; and it was important, for the satisfaction and peace of the country, that the people should now obtain an acknowledgment, on the part of the House, that further reforms in the representation were not only necessary, but would be granted. It was essential to peace and harmony in the country that the people should be satisfied; but, could that be expected under existing circumstances, where millions of the working classes were unrepresented? If her Majesty's Ministers did not now consent to the change which he proposed, and use their best endeavours to effect it, he feared Parliament might be called upon, before long, to give a much larger extent of reform, and in a manner that they would find it difficult to resist. He had no hesitation in stating to the House, that, in bringing forward this motion to extend the suffrage to all householders, and also to all persons occupying parts of houses, who should qualify as rate-payers, he did not go to the full extent of his own opinions. He was prepared to grant to the people more than household suffrage, if he could hope, in the present state of opinion in this House, and in the country, to obtain their sanction to his views; but as he knew, that many honest reformers from unfounded prejudices, and some from equally unfounded fears, were of opinion, that the Constitution could not be preserved, if more than household suffrage were granted, he would only, at present, propose to take that step towards attaining the confidence of the people. He desired to see the present limited monarchy, consisting of King, Lords, and Commons, still preserved; and he was confident that it would be most secure when based on the friendly affections of the great mass of the people, which, he feared, was not the case at the present time. To secure those affections, he submitted to the House, that the best means were to give them a participation in the election of the Representatives in this House, by whom their sentiments, their wishes, and their wants, were to be expressed. The system of representation was adopted for that express purpose; it was a plan, well suited to afford the people the best security for honest legislation in Parliament. He demanded an extension of the suffrage, because the Constitution of England was based on that representative principle. Before he proceeded to the motion, he begged to offer some general remarks on representation The right of voting for Members of Parliament, according to our ancient and best historians, was exceedingly extended; and, he believed, that no general taxation had taken place in this country in ancient times, until the people had met in districts, and had chosen Representatives to meet in Parliament, to deliberate and to decide upon every question that affected the general interests of the community. By our Constitution taxation and representation were formerly inseparable in this country; they ought to be, but were not so now. Many good authorities could be stated in support of that opinion, but he would only offer that of Lord Camden, who, on the 22nd February, 1766, on the motion for the Stamp Act Repeal, said, "My position is this—I repeat, " and will maintain it to my last hour, " *taxation and representation* are inseparable. This position is founded on the " laws of nature. It is more; it is itself an " eternal law of nature. For, whatever " is a man's own is absolutely his own. No " one has a right to take it from him without his consent. Whoever attempts to " do it, commits an injury: whoever does " it, commits a robbery." The existing system of taxation in this country was grinding, and unequal in its bearingss, for it pressed heavily on the poor and lightly on the rich; and its severity was often in proportion to the poverty of the individual. The laws imposing this unequal and unjust system had been passed by the rich, for their own advantage; and he could not be surprised that men, unrepresented in this House where those unequal laws were made, could be satisfied with the existing unjust state of things. Attempts had for many years been made to induce the aristocracy to extend the suffrage; but it was only when the people, by an almost unanimous call, demanded Reform, that the Reform Bill had (in 1832) been introduced. That measure of reform was calculated to give satisfaction to the people, if the original provisions and intentions of the Act had been carried out; and he now contended that as they had not succeeded in sufficiently extending the suffrage, and in giving that satisfaction to the people which they had promised, it was the duty of the Reform Government to consider, without delay, in what way they could now best promote the objects which they had originally in view. The principal object of the Reform Act was to take away the nomination of Members to this House from the borough-mongers, and to give the election to the people. The practice under the old system was equally injurious to the independence of the Crown, as to the House of Commons; for it was notorious, that the Crown was dependent for a Ministry on those borough-mongers who packed the House of Commons. He should hereafter shew, that the system of nomination, so odious in former years, and so unfair to the people at large, was, at this moment, almost as bad as at any period previous to the passing of the Reform Act. If the object of that Act was, as the noble Lord (Lord John Russell) had stated it to be, to procure "a full and fair representation of the people," he would ask any hon. Member, whether he could honestly say that that object had been secured? The noble Lord was reported to have said on the introduction of the Bill in that House on the 24th of June, 1831:—

> "When I propose a reform of Parliament, I propose that the people should send into this House their real Representatives, to deliberate on their wants, and to consult for their interests—to consider their grievances, and attend to their desires. I propose that they should possess, in fact, that which they have hitherto had only in theory—the vast power of holding the purse-strings of the monarch. I feel convinced that I am laying a foundation for the most salutary changes in the comfort and well-being of the people. Laws will no longer be passed in such an assembly for the benefit of Government, or classes, or individuals; they will be no longer passed by men roused at twelve o'clock at night to vote for what they know not, or against that of which they have not heard a single syllable, merely because the leader of their party tells them so to vote. Laws in a reformed Parliament will be cautiously proposed, and seriously and deliberately considered. I say, then, that if we identify this House with the people of the three kingdoms, we may hope, however slowly it may be accomplished, or however impatience or faction may complain of us for not hurrying our steps—we may hope, I say, that by extending to a great and powerful and enlightened people, the rights of having their legitimate Representatives assembled within the walls of Parliament, we furnish the means for the future carrying on unimpaired the Constitution, without diminishing the prerogatives of the Crown—without injuring the authority of either of the Houses of Parliament, and according to the rights, liberties, and interests of the nation; those rights being duly protected by the faithful Representatives of a free people, and the loyal subjects of a generous Sovereign."

That such was the intention of the Cabinet which proposed the Reform Bill, may be also inferred from the words of the noble Earl, (Lord Grey) in his address on introducing the Reform Bill to the House of Lords, on the 3rd of October, 1831. He said,

> "I believe the present to be a measure of peace and conciliation; I believe that on its acceptance or rejection depends, on the one hand, tranquillity, prosperity, and concord; on the other, the continuance of a state of political discontentment, from which these feelings must arise, naturally degenerated by such a condition of the public mind," "On one or two different occasions I have originated motions on the subject, believing, as I do, that a change is necessary to infuse new vigour into the Constitution, to unite the estates of the realm in the bonds of a sacred and happy union, and to make the House of Commons that which it was intended to be, and professed to be, and ought to be,—the full, vigorous, and efficient Representative of the people of England."

Was this House, he would ask, the full and efficient representation of the people? When, under the provisions of the Reform Bill, so many millions of our adult population, are excluded from participation in the suffrage, how can it represent the wishes of the majority of the people of this country? How can it unite the people in bonds of peace and contentment, when so few were admitted into the pale of the Constitution? This House did, indeed, represent the opinions of the few, which had been so much objected to in the unreformed Parliament; but it, certainly, did not represent the opinions of the millions, as was expected from the Bill. The objects of the Reform Bill were to extend the basis of our elections; to give satisfaction and confidence to the people, and security to the Government. He (Mr. Hume) only sought, by his motion, to obtain those most desirable objects. The people were entitled, by ancient institutions, to a suffrage more extensive than what he now proposed; it was admitted by the most eminent men who had spoken or written upon the subject, that household suffrage was the right of the people, and quite consistent with the ancient constitution of the country. That opinion was ably expressed by the promoters of the Reform Bill; when it was before the House of Lords on the 9th April, 1832, the noble Earl (Grey) by whom the measure was introduced, quoted a passage from a work of great authority, "Whitelock's book on Government," in order to show the nature and extent of the ancient right of voting. Mr. Whitelock said—

> "Whenever any question about elections was brought before the House, the inclination of the House of Commons always was, to favour popular elections, observing, that the more free they were, the more they were for the interests of the community. At this day in many boroughs the election still remains popular, being exercised by all the inhabitants, except almsmen, and such like."

"I contend, then, said Earl Grey, that the right of voting in inhabitant householders is the ancient right of voting under the constitution of this country. By the present bill this right is re-introduced. The bill confers the right of voting upon the resident householders of the borough; but then it limits that right to resident householders of 10*l.* a-year. Thus, then the bill, so far from introducing a new right, does, in fact, merely restore, with a limitation, an old acknowledged right. It is, in truth, nothing but the present scot and lot right of voting, limited to householders of 10*l.* a-year, and with the further limitation of requiring that the rates and taxes of such householders must be paid before they can be qualified to vote." Lord Grey, by the quotation from Whitelock, and the opinion then expressed, admits that the ancient right of the people was what I now seek to restore. The Reform Bill was, in fact, a partial return to the old system of household suffrage, with a limitation to houses of 10*l.* value. The attempt to give the people their right in that respect, by the Reform Bill had unfortunately failed; it was found that the number of voters in the country, at present, was too small, and so unequally distributed, as not to give satisfaction to the people, or to secure a full, fair, and free representation of them in that House. He (Mr. Hume) therefore submitted his present motion, in order that Parliament might, in justice to the people, make some amends for the failure which had taken place, and restore to them those rights to which they were by justice and sound policy, entitled. The noble Earl (Grey), not satisfied with one authority, had, on the same day, quoted the following words from the report of Mr. Sergeant Glanville, in a committee of the House of Commons, of which Coke, Seldon, Finch, Hay, were Members.

> "There being no certain custom nor prescription who should be electors and who not, we must have recourse to common right, which, to this purpose, was held to be, that more than the freeholders only ought to have voices in the election, viz. *all men inhabitant householders resident within the borough.*"

He (Mr. Hume) could produce many Parliamentary authorities; but would only give two instances in which this House had decided that householders generally had the right of voting. In a committee upon the Cirencester Election Petition in 1792 (quoted in 2 Fraser's Election Cases, p. 449-451,) it became necessary for the committee to define what was the right of election; and they gave a general definition, for purposes of enactment as to the right of voting, in the following terms which stated it to extend to

> "Every male person of full age, and not subject to any legal incapacity, who shall occupy any house or dwelling, the same being *bona fide* fitted for and applied to purposes of residence, shall, if duly registered, be entitled to vote in the election of Members to serve in Parliament."

The case of the Pontefract Petition was also before the House, and a committee then decided that the suffrage should be extended to every person who had lived in the town during six months, and such had continued the law in that borough to this time. The non-payment of rates and taxes formed no objection to voting. Householders resident was the distinguishing term.

If further proof were necessary of the original intention of the promoters of the Reform Bill to give a fair representation of the people in this House, he held in his hand an extract from a speech of the noble Lord (Lord John Russell), in the present Session. He (Mr. Hume) observed, with great regret, that the speeches of the noble Lord on reform were very inconsistent—at one time he had boldly maintained the importance of extended suffrage, while, at other times, he refused to act upon that principle. On the 6th February, 1839, the noble Lord said,

> "With respect to the original intention of the Reform Bill, he was speaking then in the presence of many before whom he had introduced that bill, and who were present at its formation, and he thought he should be corro-

borated by them when he said, 'that his intention was to give a fair representation to all parts of the country. They wished to give a preponderance to no part over the other, and he had more than once stated that they had taken a certain number of counties, and an equal number of manufacturing towns to share in the representation.'"

That speech was made by the noble Lord, in answer to a charge, that the noble Lord had originally professed and held out expectations of a fair and full representation, and now defended a preponderance of the landed interest in this House. It was matter of deep regret to all Reformers, that the noble Lord now refused to lend his aid to make this House a fair representation of all interests of the country as he had promised. He (Mr. Hume) supported the Reform Bill, when first introduced, with all its defects, because he believed it would effect very important reforms, and because the Government could not have carried out, at that time, any greater extent of reform; he consented willingly to give the bill a fair trial, before any further demands for reform should be made. But he, at the same time, distinctly stated, that if the bill did not effect the promised advantages, he should demand further changes. The lamentable results of that Act soon appeared, and every week, and every month served to give additional proofs of the insufficiency of the measure to produce a popular House of Commons. A fair trial had been given to the bill, and the number of electors was found to be greatly below that which was originally proposed; and, consequently, the fair voice of the people could not be obtained. He repeated, that the electors were, in many boroughs, reduced below 300, the minimum number fixed for the smallest borough in the United Kingdom; and he was, therefore, warranted in stating that there had been a failure, to a very great extent, in the objects which were promised to the people. It seemed, therefore, impossible that the noble Lord could, consistent with the sentiments expressed by him on former occasions, believe that the Reform Bill had answered the expectations held out by him and his colleagues. The noble Lord, (Lord J. Russell) in fact, went farther in the extension of suffrage than was now proposed: the noble Lord advocated almost universal suffrage. He said, in this House, on the 1st March 1831:—

"In the first place, then, the ancient constitution of our country declares, that no man shall be taxed for the support of the State who has not consented, by himself or his representative, to the imposition of these taxes. The well-known statute, 'De Tallagio non concedendo,' repeats the same language; and, although some historical doubts have been thrown upon it, its legal meaning has never been disputed. It includes all freemen of the land."

After this broad and comprehensive declaration, when introducing the Reform Bill, he begged the noble Lord to act now in conformity to these speeches, because, if he (Lord J. Russell) had forgotten them, he (Mr. Hume) could assure him that others had not; and he conceived that these speeches afforded him ample grounds to call upon the noble Lord now to fulfil his promises, and assist in extending the suffrage. When the noble Lord addressed the House in the terms quoted, did he mean that freemen should not be taxed, without having any representative? If he did mean that, how was it that the people were taxed when so few of them had a voice, or could give their sanction, by their Representatives, to the proceedings of the House? He would ask, whether the millions of active and industrious men, now unrepresented, who were heavily taxed without their sanction, had not a just right to complain:—they did in fact complain loudly and generally, and the noble Lord was bound with those colleagues, who assisted in passing the Reform Bill, to make good their promises to the people, of a full and fair representation in this House. He did not undervalue the reforms and advantages to the people which had been effected by the Reform Bill, because every increase of representation in Parliament, secured for even a small proportion of the people, was an important advantage. Before showing what was the actual state of the elective franchise under the Reform Bill, he would refer to one more authority, of the position which he had already taken, that all householders had of ancient times the right of electors. Mr. H. W. Tancred, M.P., of Lincoln's-inn—(the hon. Gentleman who sat near him) in a publication in 1831, "on the origin of the system of representation," affirmed, the proposition, that every person of full age, who was not subject to any legal incapacity, and who should occupy, within any city or borough, any dwelling-house, &c., should be entitled to vote in the election of a Member of Parliament, provided that such person should be rated in respect of his premises. He observes, that,

> "At all events, this appears certain that if any qualification of property were required, in the earliest Parliaments, only the tenure of the property was regarded; and no limitation of value was imposed; but that every freeholder, as suitor of the county court was entitled to vote, however small might be the estate."

He further states,—

> "In the commencement of representation, no borough contained freemen made such by admission, but only freemen made such by residences, and by sharing in the burdens and privileges of the place."

This opinion was confirmed by the researches and writings of Mr. Hallam; and, therefore, by the present motion he (Mr. Hume) was only proposing to restore the ancient privileges of the people of this country. By the best authorities, that right of suffrage was fully established; and we ought not, as we now do, to shut out from the representation the large class, on whom, in fact, the prosperity of the country mainly depended —he alluded to the artisans and working men. The ignorance of the poorer orders of the community was the plea commonly used for excluding them from the exercise of the franchise, although little means had been taken, by the Government to instruct them; but, there was another class of men — viz., physicians, surgeons, clergymen, lawyers, school masters, &c., who, if literary, and scientific knowledge, were to be the criterion of political sufficiency, were surely fit to be endowed with the elective privilege. By the present system, many members of the legal, medical, and clerical professions, although fit men, were shut out from the exercise of the franchise. He was prepared, further, to assert, that the justice of the claim for household suffrage, founded on ancient right and practice, was not the only recommendation; it was a wise policy to concede to the very general demand now made for an extension of the suffrage; and such concession, if made at this time, would be considered a boon, and would afford satisfaction to a very large portion of the community; and give encreased security to the Throne. During the last year, when a notice for a motion similar to that which he was now submiting to the House was on the paper, many petitions from the working classes, praying for household suffrage, were presented from different parts of the country; indeed he might say, that, if the sentiments entertained, and expressed almost universally, at public meetings, on the necessity of further reform in the representation of the people, were to be taken as representing public opinion, then had public opinion been most unequivocally expressed in favour of an extension of the suffrage. He would read only part of one of these petitions to the House to show what the result of granting household suffrage some years ago might have been. A petition, agreed to at a public meeting held at Newcastle-upon-Tyne, on the 13th of March, 1837, the mayor in the chair, stated, that "although they considered universal suffrage as the right of every man, yet they were prepared to give up their claim to it for a time if household suffrage were granted." The petition stated,

> "That, in the present state of the representation, the great mass of the people are entirely excluded from all share in the government of the country, and that, contrary to the first maxims of justice, and the very principles of constitutional liberty, they are called upon to obey laws, and to pay taxes, to the framing and imposition of which, they have never given their consent.—That the elective franchise is the great badge and mark of political freedom, and that the citizen who is excluded from the possession of this grand privilege of freemen, is degraded by the laws of his country, and held to the condition of a slave. —And that the meeting are, for the present, ready to forego the demand for universal suffrage, and to content themselves with petitioning for an extension of the elective franchise to every householder in Great Britain and Ireland."

What, he would ask, had been the consequence of denying timely reform to the people? Unions of the most extensive nature in every manufacturing town in Great Britain, and containing millions of the working classes, were now forming, under the title of Chartists, to demand Universal Suffrage, Ballot, Annual Parliaments, and electoral districts, with equal representation. He (Mr. Hume) conceived, that the most just and simple mode, by which the Legislature could put an end to these demands of the Chartists would be to grant household suffrage on an extensive scale. That there was a gross disparity between the numbers of the population and their Representatives, not only in each of the three kingdoms, but also in the boroughs and counties of each, as would appear from statements which he had prepared with care, and which he would now submit to the

House, to prove his assertion. He would first read a statement of the population and representation of the United Kingdom in 1831-2[*]:—

	Population census of 1831.	Electors Qualified to Vote in 1831.	Males of 20 years and upwards, in 1831.	No. of Electors in every 100 of the gross Population.	No. of Electors in every 100 of male population above 20 years.
				per Cent.	per Cent.
England ..	13,091,005	619,213	3,199,984	4·73	19·35
Wales ..	806,182	37,124	194,706	4·60	18·55
Scotland ..	2,365,114	64,447	549,821	2·72	11·72
Great Britain ..	16,262,301	720,784	3,944,511	4·43	18·27
Ireland ..	7,767,401	92,152	1,867,765	1·18	4·93
United Kingdom	24,029,702	812,916	5,812,276	3·38	13·98

This gave the proportion of electors to males of 20 years and upwards of 1 in 5 for England and Wales; for Scotland, 1 in 8; or for Great Britain, 1 in 5½; for Ireland, 1 in 20; for the United Kingdom, 1 in 7. That was the state of the representation after the first registration, in 1831-2; and he would now compare it with 1835-6.

The hon. Member then read a statement of the comparative number of persons qualified to vote as electors in the counties and boroughs, in the different parts of the United Kingdom, in 1832 and in 1835-6, shewing an increase of electors enrolled since 1832 of 143,360, or seventeen per cent.

KINGDOMS.	1832.			1835-6.		
	Counties.	Boroughs.	Total Electors.	Counties.	Boroughs.	Total Electors.
England ..	344,564	274,549	619,213	435,350	301,966	737,316
Wales ..	25,815	11,309	37,124	31,898	11,128*	43,026
Scotland ..	33,115	31,332	64,447	41,885	36,043*	77,928
Great Britain ..	403,494	317,290	720,784	509,133	349,137	858,270
Ireland ..	60,607	31,545	92,152	65,358*	32,648*	98,006
United Kingdom	464,101	348,835	812,916	574,491	381,785	956,276

The numbers marked with an asterick, are taken for the year 1834-5, no return having been made for 1835-6.

He also read an estimate of the actual state of the representation in 1837, in the United Kingdom. The population was estimated at the rates of increase of from 1821 to 1831; the electors are taken from the parliamentary returns of 1836, by which the apparent proportion of electors in the male population is increased; but, as many of the electors are registered three or four times in several counties and boroughs, and often under different qualifications in the same, the actual number of electors must be considerably less than these numbers registered.

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[*] Report of Select Committee in 1834 on Election Expenses.

	Estimated Population in 1837.	Estimated Population of Males above 20 in 1837.	Electors in 1835-36.	Proportion of Electors to gross Population.	Proportion of Electors to Males of 20 years.
England	13,876,465	3,327,984	737,316	1 in 17	1 4½
Wales	864,227	208,724	43,026	1 20	1 4½
Scotland	2,549,592	592,707	77,928	1 32	1 7
Great Britain	17,290,284	4,129,415	858,270	1 20	1 5
Ireland..........	8,396,560	2,019,053	*98,006	1 85	1 20
United Kingdom..	25,687,844	6,148,468	956,276	1 26	1 6½

* For 1834-35.

These statements exhibited neither a full or a fair distribution of the elective franchise in the three kingdoms; and the proportion of the male population who had the elective franchise, to the whole of the males of twenty years and upwards, was so small and limited as to create just dissatisfaction, and raise the general demand of the Chartists for more extensive reforms? Was it not time, therefore, for the Legislature to interfere, and put an end to so unjust and impolitic a state of things?

The injustice was not, however, confined to the inequality of voters in proportion to the population. The same disparity existed in the apportionment to the several counties and towns, of Members, in proportion to their population and electors. The inequality in the representation of the three kingdoms was thus clearly proved. The extent of the inequality between different cities and boroughs, in regard to the number of voters returning a Member in each, appears by the following general abstract of the borough representation of Great Britain in 1835-6.

	Electors.	Boroughs.	Returning Members.
There were under	200	8	10
Above 200 and under	500	61	89
Above 500 and under	1,000	76	120
		145	219
Shewing that 219 Members were returned by constituencies not exceeding 1,000 electors	..	..	..
And in boroughs above 1,000, and below .	5,000	66	117
above	5,000	11	24
Totals		222	360

This inequality he would show, more decidedly, by comparisons of particular boroughs and cities; and first, by a comparison between six of the smallest constituencies and three of the largest constituencies in England, each class returning an equal number of Members to Parliament. The hon. Member read the following statement:—

Boroughs.	No. of M. Ps.	Electors, 1835-36, Qualified.	Boroughs.	No. of M. Ps.	Electors, 1835 36, Qualified.
Ashburton	1	195	Westminster	2	15,695
Calne	1	178	Liverpool	2	12,981
Reigate	1	195	Tower Hamlets ..	2	13,189
Westbury	1	211			
Liskeard	1	234			
Midhurst.	1	246			
Total...	6	1,259	Total	6	41,865

It appeared from this statement, that in the first class of boroughs there was one Member for every 210 electors; and in the second class one Member to every 6,977 electors. So that 1,259 electors in some parts of the country had all the privileges of 41,865 in other parts of the country. Again, Cheltenham, which returns one Member, had 1,249 electors; Salford, which returns one Member, had 2,335 electors. Thus shewing that the 3,584 electors of these two places return only two Members, while in the six small boroughs, as above stated, 1,259 (or about one-third that number of electors), returned six Members.

To show in another form this disparity in the number of electors and population, he (Mr. Hume) submitted a comparison between ten of the smallest, and ten of the largest, constituencies in the boroughs of England, returning each two Members to Parliament.

Boroughs.	Electors in 1835-6.	Gross Population.	Boroughs.	Electors in 1835-6.	Gross Population.
Harwich	152	4,297	Westminster ..	15,695	202,460
Thetford	176	3,462	Tower Hamlets	13,189	302,519
Chippenham	230	5,270	Liverpool . ..	12,981	193,000
Totness	286	3,308	Finsbury	12,523	224,839
Huntingdon	264	5,413	Marylebone ..	10,592	234,294
Knaresborough ..	262	6,258	Manchester ..	10,123	187,022
Marlborough	263	4,186	Bristol	10,347	104,338
Tavistock	289	5,602	Lambeth	7,154	154,613
Andover	229	4,958	Leeds	5,052	123,393
Richmond	287	4,722	Nottingham ..	5,391	50,216
20 Members to..	2,438	47,471	20 Members to..	103,414	1,776,794

Thus, in the small constituencies, 122 electors returned one Member on the average, whilst in the large constituencies 5,170 return only one Member. The twenty Members in the small boroughs represent only 47,471 of gross population, whilst the twenty Members in the large boroughs represent 1,776,794 of gross population.

The inequality of the suffrage was further illustrated by the following comparison of seven boroughs returning one Member each, and seven returning two Members each.

—	Members.	Electors in 1835-6.	Males of 20 yrs. and above.	—	Members.	Electors.	Males of 20 years and above.
Salford	1	2,335	12,568	Harwich	2	152	1,032
Cheltenham ..	1	1,249	5,507	Thetford	2	176	831
Monmouth ..	1	1,138	1,267	Chippenham ..	2	230	1,253
Rochdale	1	832	4,838	Andover	2	229	1,191
Huddersfield..	1	778	4,569	Huntingdom ..	2	264	1,295
Chatham	1	792	4,560	Knaresborough	2	262	1,501
Dudley	1	776	5,530	Marlborough ..	2	263	1,006
Total	7	7,900	38,839	Total	14	1,576	8,109

From this, it appeared, that while 7,900 electors in a male population of 38,839, of twenty years of age and upwards, returned only seven Members; 1,576 electors in a male population of 8,109, of twenty years and upwards, returned fourteen. In the first case there was one Member to every 1,143 electors; in the other case, there was one Member to every 112 electors. Can such a state of representation be by any person, considered either a fair or a full representation? He would not trouble the House with further examples of the inequality of the suffrage in the boroughs in England; but he would add that these examples, and a reference to the general table in his hand,* proved the absurdity and injustice of such a state of the suffrage, when the promoters of the Reform Bill promised it should give a full and fair representation. The anomaly, however, was not confined to England, and in proof of this the hon. Member instanced the following:—

Comparison (In Ireland) of six small with three large boroughs, as to the number of Electors and Representatives.

Boroughs.	No. of Members.	Electors in 1834-5.	Boroughs.	No. of Members.	Electors in 1834-5.
Lisburn	1	134	Cork	2	4,461
Portarlington ..	1	156	Dublin City....	2	7,113
Tralee	1	174	Limerick	2	2,976
Dungannon	1	197			
Enniskillen	1	215			
Kinsale	1	221			
Total .. .	6	1,097	Total	6	14,550

Thus, in the six small boroughs, one Member was returned by an average of 183 electors; and in the three larger boroughs, one Member by an average of 2,423 electors. Could any man gravely maintain, that a state of representation such as this, ought to be allowed to continue?

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* See General Table of Boroughs at the end.

The same inequalities in the suffrage existed in the representation of the counties, as would be seen by the following statement of the population and representation of certain counties in England, Scotland, and Ireland.

Members.	In England.	No. of Males above 20 Years.	No. of Electors in 1835-6.
2	Huntingdonshire	11,465	2,744
2	Rutlandshire	4,553	1,391
2	Northumberland (North)	12,146	2,703
2	Worcestershire (West)	12,920	4,612
2	Westmorland	10,432	4,846
10		51,516	16,296

Members.	In England.	No. of Males above 20 Years.	No. of Electors in 1835-6.
2	Devonshire (South)	46,346	10,946
2	Middlesex	65,238	12,431
2	Lancashire (South)	94,184	17,800
2	Yorkshire (West)	156,558	29,456
2	Lancashire (North)	61,966	9,943
10	Members for	424,292	80,576

Thus, it appeared, that in England 5 of the smallest counties had 10 Members to a male population of 51,516 and 16,296 electors; whilst 5 other counties had 10 Members to a male population of 424,292 and 80,576 electors. Such instances might be multiplied in England.

He would state only one example in the counties in Scotland, where nearly the same inequality occurred as in the Scotch burghs. But that single statement would sufficiently show the unequal state of the representation in counties of Scotland in 1835 and 1836:—

Members.	Counties.	Males of 20 years.	Number of Electors in 1835-6.	Members.	Counties.	Males of 20 years.	Number of Electors in 1835-6.
1	Banffshire	8,160	670	1	Aberdeenshire	42,384	2,894
1	Berwickshire	3,408	1,195	1	Edinbur.-shire	52,704	1,518
1	Peebleshire	2,544	455	1	Lanarkshire	76,032	3,714
1	Selkirkshire	1,632	462	1	Perthshire	34,296	4,027
1	Linlithgow	5,592	692	1	Ayrshire	34,824	3,913
5	Members for	21,336	3,474	5	Members for	240,240	16,066

Thus a male population of 21,336 and 3,476 electors in 5 counties, return 5 Representatives, whilst other 5 counties, with a male population of 240,240, and with 16,066, return only the same number of representatives. That the same disparity existed in Ireland as in the counties in Scotland and in England would appear from the following statement of the representation in 5 of the smallest and 5 of the largest county constituencies in Ireland in 1834-5 from Porter's tables:—

Members.	Counties.	Males of 20 years and upwards in 1832.	Electors in 1834-5.	Members.	Counties.	Males of 20 years, and upwards in 1832.	Electors in 1834-5.
2	Louth ..	26,171	904	2	Antrim ..	73,586	3,822
2	Sligo ..	40,849	804	2	Cork ..	171,873	3,926
2	Tyrone ..	73,557	1,250	2	Down ..	82,999	3,729
2	Terry ..	63,545	1,212	2	Wexford ..	45,414	3,567
2	Kildare ..	27,625	1,152	2	Armagh ..	52,392	3,423
10	Members for ..	231,747	5,322	10	Members for ..	426,264	18,467

It there appeared, that in the 5 smallest county constituencies there were on the average 532 electors and 23,174 males of 20 years and upwards to one Member; while in the 5 largest county constituencies there were 1,846 electors and 42,626 males of 20 years and upwards to one Member. The electors of the small counties were only one-third the number of those in the larger counties, but they returned the same number of Members. He had prepared, in the same forms as he had done for England, a variety of statements of the inequality of the suffrage in Ireland; but, as his hon. Friend, the Member for Dublin, had so lately made a full exposition to the House of the Suffrage of that kingdom, he (Mr. Hume) would not state any others.

As there might be some Members who objected to alter the Reform Bill, and to make household suffrage the leading qualification, for fear of rendering the suffrage more intricate, he (Mr. Hume) had taken from the Reform Bill some of the many kinds of qualification which already existed, to show that there was already so much variety, that the extension of the household suffrage could produce no difficulty. There were actually eighty-five different varieties of qualification for the suffrage in England, of which the following appeared to be the chief; but, if the simple qualification of a resident householder, (which, as I have shown, was the ancient qualification of this country), rated to the poor and to the local taxes of the county, or borough was adopted, it would be a simpler and better qualification than all the others:

COUNTY VOTERS' QUALIFICATION BY THE REFORM ACT.

1. Freeholders ..	40 shilling freeholds Ditto Ditto for life or lives. 10*l.* life freeholds.
2. Copyholders ..	10*l.* Copyholds.
3. Tenants in Ancient Demesne .	Holding by custom of Manor.
4. Leaseholders . .	10*l.* per annum, for term of sixty years. 50*l.* per annum, for term of twenty years.
5. Occupying tenants at will (without any reference to length of term:	12 months' occupation and paying 50*l.* rent

6. Mortgagee or trustee in possession of the rents and profits of sufficient qualification.

BOROUGH VOTERS' QUALIFICATION IN ENGLAND BY REFORM ACT.

1. Occupying a House, Shop &c. of the clear annual value of 10*l*.	
2. Old rights reserved in perpetuity ..	1. Freeholders and burgage tenants in cities, and cities of counties. In Exeter, Norwich, &c., freeholders without distinction vote. In Bristol and Nottingham 40*s*. freeholders only. In Lichfield 40*s*. freeholders and burgage tenants.
In London, continued in perpetuity ..	2. Burgesses and freemen, and freemen and liverymen.
Rights reserved for a time ..	3. Paying Scot and Lot, Potwollopers, Servitude, &c.

In order to satisfy the House that the Reform Bill had not answered the purpose intended, he would now show what was the state of the representation of the United Kingdom in 1793, which was so much complained of, and compare it with the present state of the representation. His opinion was, that the evil of nomination existed quite as much now as it did then. The only difference was, that where, before the Reform Bill, a few individuals nominated a majority of the Representatives, the same thing was now done by a small constituency, or by the landed aristocracy of the district, who by undue influences of different kinds carried the elections. The following account is taken from the Petition of the Friends of the People, presented to Parliament by Mr. (now Earl) Grey, May 6, 1793. The petitioners affirmed, that of 249 members returned for England, 70 were returned by places without virtual representation; 90 more by places with less than 50 voters; 37 more by places none exceeding 100 voters; and 52 by 26 places, none exceeding 200 voters: that, of 30 members for counties in Scotland, 20 were returned by less than 100 electors each; and 10 by less than 250 each; and that, of 15 members returned by Scotch burghs and districts, 13 were by places not containing 100 voters each, and 2 by places of less than 125 each. The petitioners having thus made out, that 294 members (a majority of the whole House) were chosen in this manner, proceeded to state, that 84 individuals, or borough mongers, sent to Parliament by their own authority 157 members, and 150 more were returned by the recommendation of 70 powerful individuals; together, making 307 members, chosen by the influence of only 154 patrons. So much for the constituency in 1793, which produced so much general discontent in the country, and was productive of so much evil to the country by its corrupt acts!

What was the present state of the constituency under the Reform Act? By an analysis, carefully made, of the constituency of the United Kingdom, it appeared that 347 members, a majority of the House of Commons, were elected by 180,603 electors, being, on the average, 520 electors for every member.* Thus, somewhat more than one-fifth of the whole of 956,272 of registered electors, or one-fortieth of the whole male population of 6,148,468 of 20 years and upwards; or 1-141th of the gross population of the United Kingdom, returned a majority of Representatives to the House of Commons, at this time. After this statement, and the details which he (Mr. Hume) had given of the inequality of the electors, population, and representation, he maintained that, essentially, the evils of nomination and the want of representation remained nearly as great as ever: and the influence of power, and of property, was so exercised, that individual voters could not possibly, from the want of proper protection, give effect to their honest opinions. But, even admitting, that the electors could all fairly express their opinions, by their suffrage, their number was so few that they could not be said to represent the opinions or interests of the people generally. Surely, therefore, after the fair trial that had been made, it was time for the House to reconsider this subject, and no longer to disregard the loud and urgent claims of the unrepresented millions. The people would be less than men if they did not, under such circumstances, clamour for their rights; and he hoped they would not cease to demand their rights until they obtained them. It may be asked, what addition was proposed to be made by household suffrage to the electors? It was very difficult to form a correct estimate of the increase that would be made in the franchise, if the scheme which he had proposed was adopted, whereby every householder, and every person occupying part of a house, and rated to the poor-rate and local taxes, was authorised to vote; the effect, undoubtedly, would be to more than double the number of voters. The number of electors by occupying houses of 10*l.* value would be a bad criterion of the number of voters that would be created if every inhabitant householder had the suffrage, as the proportion of houses and of electors varied in every town. He would only state one example in proof of what he advanced. To elucidate this, he had prepared a statement of the existing numbers of their population in 1831; of the number of electors in 1834; of the number of inhabited houses; and of 10*l.* houses and upwards in twelve of the principal boroughs in England as taken from the boundary reports and plans of 1832:—

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* See Tables at page 1080.

TWELVE BOROUGHS.	Population in 1831.	Number of Electors in 1834.	Inhabited Houses in 1831.	Number in 1831 of 10*l.* Houses.
Manchester	187,022	8,432	30,858	12,728
Liverpool	193,000	12,492	27,466	17,427
Finsbury	224,839	10,299	29,605	23,266
London	122,395	18,288	17,315	14,564
Marylebone	234,294	7,752	27,888	21,630
Tower Hamlets	302,519	9,462	66,777	23,187
Westminster	202,460	13,268	21,893	17,681
Lambeth	154,613	4,435	29,079	16,405
Southwark	134,117	5,249	22,482	9,923
Birmingham	142,251	3,681	30,000	7,000
Leeds	123,393	4,774	25,456	6,683
Sheffield	90,657	3,587	20,594	4,383
Total	2,111,560	101,719	349,413	174,872

From this it appears, that, by the impediments thrown in the way of householders becoming electors, by rate-paying clauses and other difficulties, only one-half of the inhabited houses are enrolled as 10*l.* houses, and scarcely two-thirds of their inhabitants are enrolled as electors. In these twelve boroughs, containing a population in 1831 of 2,111,560 souls, there were 349,413 inhabited houses; but only 174,872 houses of the value of 10*l.* and upwards, and only 101,719 registered electors in that number. Can such results be satisfactory, either to householders generally, or to those of 10*l.* value, when it was held out, that every 10*l.* householder was, by the Reform Bill, to have a vote? There was no recent return of the total number of houses in the United Kingdom, to enable him to be very accurate. He found, however, in the population returns, that an attempt had been made to give a return of the number of houses in Great Britain and Ireland, and the following was the statement which he found in the returns for 1821 and 1831:—*

He believed, that if household suffrage rated to the poor was adopted, the number of voters that would be added to the existing number would be 1,250,000 and upwards; making the total number of electors in the United Kingdom amount to upwards of two millions and a quarter. This number, though large, would only be a little more than the third part of the six millions of males above the age of twenty: but the addition would, in his opinion, give great satisfaction in the present state of public opinion, and promote peace in the country. It would still shut out many persons well qualified to be entrusted with the elective franchise. For his own part, he had no fears from an extension of the suffrage; and on the principle, "that taxation and representation should go together," he would include all the adult part of the male population not tainted with crime: but he was willing to wait and see how far the general discontent could be allayed by household suffrage. There was at present much discontent, arising from the want and privations to which the labouring classes were exposed, by heavy taxation and unequal laws; and they justly demanded, that they should have the right of suffrage, in order that they might have the choice of their Representatives in this House to attend to their interests and make laws for them. Many of the unrepresented had become Chartists, and had raised objections to many very important measures which they thought less material and important than that of universal suffrage. They objected, as is generally known, to petition even for a repeal of the Corn-laws, that their attention might not be diverted from universal suffrage, which they believed, would enable them to obtain the administrative reforms of the Corn and other laws; he thought the Chartists were wrong in this respect, because, in the opinion of their best friends they should endeavour to get cheap food as soon as they could, to enable them the better to continue their struggle for their more extended rights. He was sure that if they looked at this matter a little more attentively than they had done, they would see that it was for their interest to get a repeal of the Corn-laws as soon as possible, whether universal suffrage was obtained or not; and they might reasonably expect that when the corn monopoly was abolished, other classes in the community would join with them to get an extension of the suffrage. Although, by altering the old representative system, many beneficial reforms had been effected, yet it was evident that much more was required to be done to accomplish the promises held out to the people by the Government. It was notorious, that the elections in many places were retained in the hands of a few persons, and the elections were made under their nomination, and the general interests of the country were disregarded and sacrificed to selfish interests. As long as this state of nomination lasted it was impossible that the working classes could be satisfied; particularly when the amount of the national debt, and of the taxation requisite to carry on the Government, which exceeded fifty millions a year, were considered—that burden pressed on the means of every poor man in the community, and prevented millions from getting the means even of a comfortable subsistence. He (Mr. Hume) could not define what the objects of Parliamentary Reform were, so well as a journalist in 1833 had very ably done. In the *Times* of the 14th of December of that year, he found the following paragraph:—

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* See Table in following page.

> "Parliamentary Reform means, in substance, a security lodged in the hands of the people for the redress of whatever they conceive to be a national grievance, whether authorised, or not prevented by the existing law. But the right and power to redress *all grievances* which afflict the *people collectively*, involves the *duty of legislating* for the redress of whatever grievances affect a *particular portion* of the people, otherwise the most precious of all all rights, viz.: that of *equal justice* might be altogether excluded from our idea of upright government and of civil liberty."

		1821. (No.)		1831. (No.)
Great Britain:	Inhabited Houses	2,429,630		2,850,937
	Building	21,679		27,327
	Uninhabited	790,041		132,634
	Total No. of houses	3,241,450		3,010,898
Ireland:	Inhabited Houses	1,142,602		1,249,816
	Building	35,251		15,308
	Uninhabited	1,350		40,654
	Total No. of houses	1,179,203		1,295,778
United Kingdom	Totals	4,420,653		4,316,676

He asked for no other reforms. But it appeared to him that that class which possessed the advantages which wealth and power gave them as legislators, did not act with equal justice to the many; but endeavoured to support the abuses of the system for the benefit of the few. Was it possible, then, that the millions who were not represented, and constantly plundered by unequal legislation, could be satisfied with the present state of things? He thought, that the people were entitled to obtain, in a quiet manner, that change in the repesentation which was their right, and if this House did not immediately adopt some such plan as he had now proposed, he feared some serious calamity. He repeated, that the suffrage might with perfect safety be extended more than he had proposed; but he had abstained at this time from proposing more than household suffrage, in conformity with, and in deference to, the opinions of many excellent persons. Although he was convinced, that the Government could not be on a safer basis than when it rested on the affections, and possessed the confidence of the people. The differences which, unhappily, existed so generally between workmen and their employers, and the state of discontent of the millions at being unrepresented in this House, had been made objections against the extension of the suffrage to workmen generally. But he (Mr. Hume) was confident, that no measure could be adopted which was better calculated to promote harmony and good feeling between masters and their workmen than giving the men the right of suffrage. At present the relative situations of these parties were very dissimilar in the eye of the law. The one party was represented, and a law-maker; the other party was unrepresented, and, in many respects, no better than a slave. The possession of the right of suffrage by the men would raise them in the scale of society, and their employers would then act towards them with more forbearance and attention than they now did. The effects of that change would be a better feeling and greater harmony in every manufactory in the country, which he considered, a most desirable result. With respect to the fears entertained by many of universal suffrage, he would only observe, that there was no such thing as universal suffrage. He would have as extended a franchise as possible: the exceptions should be few, and only such as it was evident would be injurious to the peace and to the general interests of the community. The suffrage was by the Reform Bill given on the qualification of property almost exclusively;—he thought that the personal rights of persons ought to be attended to and represented, as well as the rights of property. But he would not enter on that subject at present. His first motion was, that the House should resolve into a Committee of the whole House, for a re-consideration of the Reform Bill; and every person who thought the Reform Bill ought to be amended should vote with him. The bill to be amended was the 2d Will. 4th, c. 45, intituled, "An Act to amend the Representation of the people of England and Wales."*

Lord *John Russell* said, that the hon. Member for Kilkenny had certainly made an extensive motion on an important subject. He had gone through all the changes which had been made in the state of the representation in the year 1832, and had proposed upon those changes a large extension of the suffrage; and yet, with all these recommendations to the notice of the House, his motion, if he might judge from the languid state of the House, had excited little interest and attention. He could not wonder at the inattention which prevailed, when he looked at the proposition which the hon. Member for Kilkenny had put upon the votes, but had declined to put into the Speaker's hands; for that proposition was not, that, finding faults in the Reform Act, we should make a new scheme of representation, on which we should be prepared to rest, but that we should establish a certain intermediate step to be changed again, whenever it was deemed advisable to give still further extension to the suffrage. The hon. Member had shown that, under the present system, one in every five adult males in England and Wales had the right of suffrage, and his proposition was, that one out of every three should be qualified to vote. At present, four out of every five adults were excluded from voting; according to the hon. Member's proposition two out of every three would be excluded. Why, if his proposition were carried, we should have fresh applications the next day to change a constituency so narrowed, and we should have as many applications then from the two that were excluded as

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* See Tables referred to in this Speech in the following page.

Abstract of the Parliamentary Boroughs of the United Kingdom, classified according to the number of Registered Electors in 1834.

Classification.	England.			Wales.			Scotland.			Ireland.			Totals.			Each Total added to the proceeding.		
	Boroughs.	Voters.	Representatives.	Boroughs.	Voters.	Representatives.	Boroughs.	Voters.	Representatives.	Boroughs.	Voters.	Representatives.	Boroughs.	Voters.	Representatives.	Boroughs.	Voters.	Representatives.
Under 200 Electors.	8	1,431	10	..	......	..	..	......	..	4	662	4	12	2,093	14	12	2,093	14
Above 200 and not exceeding 300	23	5,961	32	1	218	1	..	......	..	6	1,462	6	30	7,641	39	42	9,734	53
.. 300 .. 400	23	7,982	35	1	309	1	1	362	1	6	2,339	6	31	10,692	43	73	20,426	96
.. 400 .. 500	12	5,413	19	..	......	..	..	......	..	1	474	1	13	5,887	20	86	26,313	116
.. 500 .. 600	17	9,135	26	3	1,616	3	2	1,110	2	3	1,665	3	25	13,526	34	111	39,839	150
.. 600 .. 700	16	10,504	29	1	672	3	2	1,290	2	2	1,345	2	21	13,811	34	132	53,650	184
.. 700 .. 800	9	6,950	15	1	773	1	1	785	1	3	2,186	3	14	10,697	20	146	64,347	204
.. 800 .. 900	6	5,160	12	2	1,798	2	3	2,534	3	1	805	1	12	10,297	18	158	74,644	222
.. 900 .. 1,000	11	10,471	21	1	987	1	1	991	1	.	......	.	13	12,449	23	171	87,093	245
.. 1,000 .. 1,100	4	4,161	7	1	1,069	1	2	2,206	2	..	......	..	7	7,346	10	178	94,439	255
.. 1,100 .. 1,300	12	14,521	24	2	2,385	2	2	2,431	2	..	......	..	16	19,337	28	194	113,776	283
.. 1,300 .. 1,500	6	8,331	12	1	1,303	1	..	......	..	2	2,904	3	9	12,538	16	203	126,314	299
.. 1,500 .. 2,000	10	16,334	20	..	......	..	4	6,650	4	..	......	..	14	22,984	24	217	149,298	323
.. 2,000 .. 3,000	9	22,032	17	..	......	..	1	2,098	1	3	7,175	6	13	31,305	24	230	180,603	347
.. 3,000 .. 4,000	6	20,837	12	..	......	..	..	......	..	..	......	.	6	20,837	12	236	201,440	359
.. 4,000 .. 5,000	6	26,063	12	..	......	..	..	......	..	1	4,461	2	7	30,524	14	243	231,964	373
.. 5,000 and upwards.	9	95,342	20	..	......	..	2	15,122	4	1	7,113	2	12	117,577	26	255	349,541	399
Total Borough Representation.	187	270,628	323	14	11,130	14	21	35,582	23	33	32,291	39	255	349,541	399			
County Members.			144			15			30			64			253			
University Members.			4									2			6			
Total of Representatives.			471			29			53			105			658			

Parliamentary Representation of the Boroughs of the United Kingdom and the registered voters at the last General Election of 1835, classed in Tables.

(From Parliamentary Papers, Session 1836, *Nos.* 199 *and* 277.*)*

ENGLAND.

Boroughs.	No. of Electors.						4,000 and upwards.	Representatives.
	Under 300.	300 to 500	500 to 800	800 to 1000	1000 to 2000	2000 to 4000		
Abingdon	292							1
Andover	242							2
Arundel		360						1
Ashburton	190							1
Ashton			515					1
Aylesbury					1544			2
Banbury	224							1
Barnstaple			790					2
Bath						2764		2
Berwick			618					2
Bedford					1252			2
Beverley					1042			2
Bewdley		414						1
Birmingham						3681		2
Blackburn			761					2
Bodmin		313						2
Bolton				968				2
Boston				938				2
Bradford					1225			2
Bridgnorth			791					2
Bridgewater		430						2
Bridport		422						2
Brighton					1382			2
Bristol							10,100	2
Bury			526					1
Buckingham		351						2
Bury St. Edmund's			633					2
Calne	178							1
Cambridge					1582			2
Canterbury					1467			2
Carlisle				946				2
Chatham			672					1
Cheltenham				960				1
Chester						2053		2
Chichester*								2
Chippenham	217							2
Christchurch		354						1
Cirencester			615					2
Clithero		351						1
Cockermouth		328						2
Colchester					1152			2
Coventry						3577		2
Cricklade					1633			2
Dartmouth	240							1
Derby					1478			2
Devizes		311						2
Devonport					1870			2
Dorchester		318						2
Dover					1567			2
Droitwich	285							1
Dudley			797					1
Durham				892				2
Evesham		338						2
Exeter						3239		2
Eye	282							1
Finsbury							10,299	2
Frome	285							1
Gateshead			506					1
Gloucester					1523			2
Grantham			667					2
Greenwich						2516		2
Great Grimsby			592					1
Guildford			537					2
Halifax			648					2
Harwich	156							2
Hastings			673					2
Hellestone		356						1
Hereford City				891				2
Hertford			618					2
Honiton		471						2
Horsham	280							1
Carried over	12	14	17	6	13	6	2	121

Boroughs.	No. of Electors.						4,000 and upwards.	Representatives.
	Under 300.	300 to 500	500 to 800	800 to 1000	1000 to 2000	2000 to 4000		
Brought up	12	14	17	6	13	6	2	121
Huddersfield			671					1
Hull							4244	2
Huntington		380						2
Hythe		477						1
Ipswich					1209			2
Kendal		344						1
Kidderminster		383						1
Knaresborough	264							2
Lambeth							4435	2
Lancaster					1207			2
Launceston		323						1
Leeds							4774	2
Leicester						3049		2
Leominster			694					2
Lewes			761					2
Lichfield			695					2
Lincoln					1124			2
Liskeard	216							1
Liverpool							12,492	2
London							18,288	4
Ludlow		360						2
Lyme Regis	250							1
Lymington	294							2
King's Lynn			662					2
Macclesfield				895				2
Maidstone					1254			2
Maldon			789					2
Malmsbury	292							1
Malton			616					2
Manchester							8432	2
Marlborough	254							2
Marlow, Great	240							2
Marylebone							7752	2
Midhurst*								1
Monmouth					1088			1
Morpeth		336						1
Newark					1273			2
Newcastle under Lyne				987				2
Newcastle on Tyne							4054	2
Newport			500					2
Northallerton	261							1
Northampton						2178		2
Norwich							4102	2
Nottingham							4454	2
Oldham					1029			2
Oxford						2436		2
Penryn				811				2
Peterborough City			685					2
Petersfield	190							1
Plymouth					1571			2
Pontefract				869				2
Poole		450						2
Portsmouth					1340			2
Preston						3734		2
Reading					1002			2
Reigate	165							1
Retford, East						2459		2
Richmond	278							2
Ripon		383						2
Rochdale			746					1
Rochester				967				2
Rye		471						1
St. Albans			544					2
St. Ives			599					1
Salford						2336		1
Salisbury			650					2
Sandwich				934				2
Scarborough		412						2
Shaftesbury			554					1
Sheffield						3587		2
	23	25	31	12	23	13	12	244

* No return under 800.

Boroughs.	No. of Electors.						4000 and upwards.	Representatives.
	Under 300.	300 to 500	500 to 800	800 to 1000	1000 to 2000	2000 to 4000		
Brought up ..	23	25	31	12	23	13	12	244
Shoreham					1910			2
Shrewsbury					1270			2
Southampton					1172			2
South Shields....			518					1
Southwark							5249	2
Stafford					1117			2
Stamford			755					2
Stroud..........					1305			2
Stockport				922				2
Stoke on Trent ..					1266			2
Sudbury			554					2
Sunderland......					1359			2
Tamworth			505					2
Taunton				920				2
Tavistock	289							2
Tewkesbury		396						2
Thetford........	160							2
Thirst	267							2
Tiverton........		473						1
Totness	259							2
Tower Hamlets..							9462	2
Truro			510					2
Tynemouth			760					1
Wakefield			617					1
Wallingford		366						1
Walsall			578					1
Wareham		339						1
Warrington	247							1
Warwick				971				2
Wells		377						2
Wenlock........				809				2
Westbury	192							1
Westminster							13,268	2
Weymouth......			518					2
Whitby		432						1
Whitehaven		466						1
Wigan		495						2
Wilton	203							1
Winchester			515					2
Windsor			504					2
Wolverhampton					1522			2
Woodstock......		306						1
Worcester						2400		2
Wycombe		309						2
Yarmouth					1615			2
York						2890		2
Total Eng. Bors.	30	35	42	16	32	15	15	323

WALES.

Boroughs.	No. of Electors.						4000 and upwards.	Representatives.
	Under 300.	300 to 500	500 to 800	800 to 1000	1000 to 2000	2000 to 4000		
Beaumaris	216							1
Brecknock		309						1
Cardiff			672					1
Cardigan				899				1
Carmarthen			773					1
Carnarvon					1217			1
Denbigh				987				1
Flint					1067			1
Haverfordwest ..			538					1
Merthyr Tydvil..			561					1
Montgomery				399				1
Pembroke					1168			1
Radnor			517					1
Swansea						1303		1
Total Welsh Bors.	1	1	5	3	3	1	—	14

SCOTLAND.

Boroughs.	No. of Electors.						4000 and upwards.	Representatives.
	Under 300.	300 to 500	500 to 800	800 to 1000	1000 to 2000	2000 to 4000		
Aberdeen						2094		1
Ayr District				848				1
Dumfries do.....				991				1
Dundee					1751			1
Edinburgh							6200	2
Elgin				812				1
Falkirk					1046			1
Glasgow							8922	2
Greenock					1170			1
Haddington			621					1
Inverness			788					1
Kilmarnock					1261			1
Kirkaldy			539					1
Kirkwall			571					1
Leith district....					1838			1
Montrose					1551			1
Paisley					1510			1
Perth				874				1
St. Andrew's....			669					1
Stirling					1060			1
Wigtown		362						1
To. Scotch Burghs	—	1	5	4	8	1	2	23

IRELAND.

Boroughs.	No. of Electors.						4000 and upwards.	Representatives.
	Under 300.	300 to 500	500 to 800	800 to 1000	1000 to 2000	2000 to 4000		
Armagh			541					1
Athlone	274							1
Bandonbridge ..	293							1
Belfast						2137		2
Carlow		307						1
Carrickfergus....					1431			1
Cashel..........		327						1
Clonmel				805				1
Coleraine		320						1
Cork							4461	2
Downpatrick....			525					1
Drogheda			651					1
Dublin							7113	2
Dundalk........		376						1
Dungannon	196							1
Dungarvon......			707					1
Ennis	238							1
Enniskillen	215							1
Galway						2062		2
Kilkenny			599					1
Kinsale	221							1
Limerick						2976		2
Lisburn	134							1
Londonderry....			703					1
Mallow		474						1
New Ross......	221							1
Newry			776					1
Portarlington ..	156							1
Sligo			694					1
Tralee	174							1
Waterford					1473			2
Wexford		373						1
Youghal		338						1
To. Irish Boros.	10	7	8	1	2	3	2	30

Note.—In the Scot and Lot Boroughs, the number of Electors are not more than two-thirds of the number in the List: the names of one-third being set down twice, *once* as *Scot and Lot Voters,* and once as 10*l.* Voters.

we had now from the four. He saw at present no demand for household suffrage; but there was a demand for universal suffrage from a number of persons who were eager to effect a change in the basis of our representation. The real question, then, for the House that evening was, whether it would adhere to the system of representation as it then stood, or whether it would adopt universal suffrage. Each of those propositions had its followers; but the notion of going through all the agitation and all the contest which must be gone through to carry household suffrage, and then to begin a new agitation and a new contest, as the hon. Member for Kilkenny proposed, for a still more extensive right of suffrage was little likely to meet the approbation of many Members in that House. The hon. Member for Kilkenny had said, "Hon. Gentlemen may seek to put this question off, but in spite of their manœuvres, all the people counted by heads will ultimately obtain the right of voting." Now, he would tell the hon. Member for Kilkenny that it was not he but the hon. Member himself who was putting off the settlement of that question. It was not likely that the hon. Member's proposition could ever give satisfaction to the people. He would not give universal suffrage because all the operatives were not yet sufficiently enlightened; he would only give household suffrage, Why, would not the inevitable result of this be, that the universal suffrage men would ask the hon. Member how he knew that they had not acquired that knowledge which he deemed sufficient to entitle them to that suffrage which he (Mr. Hume) admitted must ultimately be granted to them? He would now go in detail through the points which the hon. Member had raised in his speech. The hon. Member had called upon those members of the Government who had proposed the Reform Bill, if they valued their consistency, to support the change which he now recommended. In other words, the hon. Member called upon those who had proposed a great and extensive change in the representation with a view of settling it upon grounds that were reasonable and fair, to abandon that change and to make a further change upon grounds that were neither fair, fixed, nor certain. Now, on the ground of consistency, he contended that the Government could not undo what it had already done, or oppose the system of which it had been the author. The hon. Member had also stated various reasons why he was dissatisfied with the operation of the Reform Act. When the hon. Member showed that one out of every five adult males in England and Wales, and that one out of every eight adult males in Scotland, and that one out of every twenty adult males in Ireland was an elector, he showed that the basis of our representation was not narrow, but large and comprehensive. The hon. Member had then entered upon the question of inequality, and had gone into a great mass of statistical details to prove that places with a small number of electors returned as many Members as places with a much larger number of electors. Now, if that was an evil, it was an evil apparent on the face of the Reform Bill. In the first Reform Bill it was proposed to disfranchise sixty, and in the last fifty-six such boroughs; but it was well known that many boroughs were left with the right of representation which had a population very little above 5,000 souls. As the hon. Member had spoken to him of consistency, he would just read to the House an extract from a speech of the hon. Member containing his observations in praise of this system which he now denounced as founded on inequality and as full of anomalies. The noble Lord then read the passage in which Mr. Hume said, that "The plan of the noble Lord far exceeded his expectations; that he knew that any change in the representation must be accompanied with difficulties; which he trusted that the noble Lord would not be discouraged by the difficulties which surrounded him, but that he would persist in his own project; and that he had great pleasure in informing him that every person with whom he had conversed that morning had expressed their satisfaction at the plan proposed to the House." The hon. Member had also stated, on another occasion, that the plan proposed by the Government had elicited the almost universal approbation of the country; and yet he now came forward to find fault with it because it contained defects, which, if they were defects, were as palpable when they were first proposed as at the present minute. He had great doubts whether, if the House were of opinion that another change should be made in our system of representation, the plan now proposed by the hon. Member would give satisfaction to the classes which still remained unrepresented. The hon. Member had not made out that, under his plan, all our artisans, whose talents, natural and acquired, he willingly acknowledged and whom the House ought always to treat with the greatest respect would be entitled to vote. If the hon. Member had shown that all those persons would enter into his scheme of representation, then supposing that an extensive alteration in the representation were determined upon, his scheme might, perhaps, be one worthy of adoption. But if he had understood the hon. Member rightly, he had confined his plan to those artizans who occupied parts of houses and were rated. Very often those persons were lodgers and were not rated. The householder who let them part of his house was rated, and acquired in consequence the right to vote. But the hon. Member complained of the inequalities of the Reform Bill. Now, it was notorious, when the Reform Bill was first proposed, that it did not establish equal divisions. If the Government had intended anything of that sort, it would not have been difficult, by referring to maps and statistical details, to have divided the country into parcels, and to have allotted a certain number of Members to certain districts with a certain amount of population. But he did not think that such a plan would have given satisfaction to the country. The plan which he had on a former occasion brought forward was based, as he thought every plan of representation for the country ought to be based, on numbers, property, and intelligence. He did not think that any plan of representation for this country, based on mere numbers, would be satisfactory. He did not think we could adopt in this country the rule that prevailed in the United States of America, that the majority should be supreme, and that the basis of the representation should rest on numbers alone. But if that rule could not be adopted, and if we must look on intelligence as well as numbers, he thought it absolutely necessary that some of those smaller boroughs should exist, where the stream of property, running very much in one direction, would enable persons of great talent and standing to be returned to Parliament. That was the course of things which occurred in the first elections under the Reform Bill. At that time, in consequence of the strong opposition made to the bill, there was a very strong popular cry against the authors of that opposition. Now, when the first elections under the Reform Bill occurred, they had seen, entering that House,—not, certainly, a very great number of persons professing those political principles—not an unfair representation of the country in that respect—but men of great personal eminence in their vocations, whether members of the legal, military, or other professions. If ever this question came to be fully argued, he should be able to show, he thought, the superiority of the Reform Act over any plan which would go to divide the country into districts. But the hon. Gentleman had, in fact, not stated that he meant to divide the country into districts; he had not stated anything more than that he meant to have household suffrage. If that was all, there were some of the smaller boroughs which were very corrupt, and into which they would only be introducing bribery on a very extensive scale. Such were some of those which the hon. Member had enumerated, Pontefract for instance, were the scot and lot franchise of the potwallopers had existed, which had been notorious for constant and repeated acts of bribery. Therefore, he said, the hon. Gentleman's plan was totally incomplete. If the hon. Member proposed to enact household sufferage with the present division into counties and boroughs he would only give room for increased bribery and corruption. If he proposed to divide the country into districts, they must have a totally new plan; the hon. Member must state to the House what he had now omitted to state, and must submit fairly its various advantages and disadvantages. Let it not be forgotten that when that was proposed, it was proposed that all boroughs under 10,000 or 20,000 inhabitants should be disfranchised. By that act the greatest number of the boroughs of the country would be deprived of the right of returning a Member. He should make but one more remark with respect to what the hon. Gentleman had said of the great burdens borne by the people of this country, and the large amount of taxation. That large amount of taxation, as the hon. Gentleman well knew, was chiefly required to defray the charge of a debt to which the faith of this country was pledged. It was not absorbed in maintaining establishments which this country could spare, and which had certainly rendered the greatest service to its interests. Taxation could not be very greatly reduced without reducing that to which the faith of the country was engaged. His belief was, that—not by the hon. Gentleman and those who in this House advocated the extension of the suffrage, but by those who would be returned to a Parliament elected by universal suffrage—one of the means adopted of relieving the people would be a refusal to fulfil the engagements entered into between the people and the public creditor. Now, he believed, that if they were now to alter the representation, and accede to the proposal of conferring the suffrage on all householders, a demand would then be immediately set up for universal suffrage, and that that demand would be based upon the belief that the Parliament so elected would not keep the faith of the country, and that taxation would be reduced, perhaps 5,000,000*l.* or 6,000,000*l.* so as merely to maintain some necessary establishments, and prevent the public creditor from receiving what was his due. That was one among many reasons why he thought it most dangerous now to make any change in the representation of the country. He had always said, on bringing forward a plan of reform, which he had frequently done unsuccessfully, that he did not wish to propose it as affecting the state of public distress or prosperity, that he could hold out no prospect of great or immediate relief of the burdens which the people had to bear, and that the question ought not to be considered under any such aspect. He had always expressed these sentiments both when in the Government and in opposition, and when some parties who supported reform encouraged such expectations, but at the same time he had always believed that, not being able to grant any extensive relief from taxation, a time would come when numbers of the people would proclaim that they were discontented with the Reform Act, would say that it had not given the relief they expected, and would demand further changes. But he would suggest to those hon. Members who favoured this demand, and particularly the hon. Member for Kilkenny and the hon. Member for London, who, he saw, did him the honour to pay particular attention to what he was saying, that if after effecting a great change in the representative system, after passing through a mighty struggle, and almost convulsing the country from one end to the other by the proposal and the resistance, they were in a few years to attempt a further alteration, they would shake the confidence of the people in the institutions of the country, and in the engagements made with the public creditor, while those who raised the cry would not be satisfied with household suffrage, would not be satisfied with what the hon. Member styled a fair and equal representation, would not be satisfied with seeing the electors distributed in the proportion of 5,000 to each Member, would not be satisfied with changes which they would regard as mere theoretical improvements; but, step by step, would proceed to exact what they considered a substantial benefit, namely, such a reduction of the taxes as would be incompatible with the settlements to which the faith of the public was pledged. Entertaining these views with respect to the motion of the hon. Member for Kilkenny, he certainly should give a direct negative to his proposition, as he should to any proposition founded on similar principles, and tending to repeal altogether the Reform Act of 1832.

Mr. *Grote* said, that in spite of the great want of interest and attention in the House to which the noble Lord had alluded, he hoped they would be good enough to listen to him while making a few remarks on what had fallen from the noble Lord. The hon. Member for Kilkenny had, he thought, rendered great service by setting forth so many important facts, which were in all probability little known to the public, and which, when placed before them, were calculated to open their eyes to the real state of the representation, and to lead to such improvements as might make it a sound and efficient index to the real state of public feeling. He would leave it to the noble Lord to say whether such an exposure of the real state of the representation was or was not calculated to raise it in the estimation of the public. The noble Lord had dwelt very much on the mischiefs of the future changes, and the danger of unsettling the principles established in 1832 by the Reform Act; and he must say, that it had seemed to him, in following the noble Lord's observations, that the noble Lord had borrowed a great number of them from the speeches made by the opponents of his own bill in 1831 and 1832. Sure he was, that almost every one of the topics urged by the noble Lord this evening had been urged long before, and certainly not less forcibly, by the right hon. Baronet, the Member for Tamworth, and those who opposed the noble Lord's views; and sure he was, that if the noble Lord had taken the same line then as he now took, he would have gone out against the Reform Bill. When the noble Lord talked of settling important questions, he must reckon upon a singular want of progression in the public mind, a delusion which he was astonished any one so deeply read in English history as the noble Lord should entertain. Were not the same arguments used against those who brought forward any motion for making any change in the state of things at present existing? In the course of the discussion on the Corn-laws, had they not been told by hon. Gentlemen on the other side that nothing could be so monstrous as to unsettle or disturb the existing system, which worked so admirably well? The noble Lord, the Member for Northamptonshire (Lord Maidstone), had even said, that the motion made regarding those laws ought to have been rejected without a discussion. If the principle of finality were to be adopted on any important question, it ought, in consistency, to be urged as conclusive against entertaining every other question. He did not see, for instance, why his hon. Friend and himself, who were averse to any alteration in the beer laws, should not urge the doctrine of finality in bar to any proposal to change them. He knew that more substantial arguments against that change might be drawn from the amount of capital engaged in that trade, and the disturbances which it would produce. He could not think the noble Lord would carry the public with him by simply telling them they had got the Reform Bill, and must be content to take it for better or worse. What one argument had the noble Lord advanced to show that the persons whom the hon. Member for Kilkenny wished to intrust with the elective franchise were unfit to exercise it? That was the only argument relevant to the proposal of his hon. Friend; for if these persons were worthy of the privilege, and were yet debarred from it, surely they had just grounds of complaint. The noble Lord had said they were worthy to exercise it, and yet refused to permit them. If the noble Lord could offer no proof that the persons of whom his hon. Friend spoke were unworthy of this privilege, they had a right to say, that there was no ground for excluding them. He could not consent to treat the Reform Act as a kind of canon of scripture, which was to have nothing added and nothing taken away. He might respect that statute for the rights which it conferred, but he would not respect it for those which it withheld. He never could admit because the Reform Act was a measure in itself good and proper to be proposed—because it had done good so far as it went, mutilated though it had been in its progress through the House. That therefore, the hon. Member for Kilkenny, or any other hon. Member, was to be precluded from proposing any measure based on the same principles and tending to realise the same results. The hon. Member for Kilkenny had enumerated many defects of the Reform Bill, and, so far as he could follow the noble Lord, the noble Lord had not disputed the statements as to the inequality of the present scheme of representation. The noble Lord said, that that feature of the Reform Bill was from the first apparent on the face of the measure and that it had never been intended to rectify that inequality; but to leave it untouched. If the noble Lord admitted this to be a defect existing before the Reform Act, and left unredressed by it, that was surely a good reason for having that act re-modelled and altered according to the better and more enlarged views that now prevailed. He could have wished to hear the noble Lord enter more fully into the main alteration proposed by his hon. Friend, which he understood to be the extension of the suffrage to all householders. He saw no valid reason for withholding the elective suffrage from any man, unless it could be proved, or a strong presumption could be raised, that he was unfit to exercise it. That view he conceived to be in accordance with the theory of representative government in every nation which had possessed one. He believed the principle universally assumed was, that it was desirable to have the representative body coincident, as nearly as possible, with the body of males of mature age in the community; there must be exceptions, but these must be defined by some rule founded on ascertained or probable conditions. The franchise was not to be withheld from a man merely on caprice, or without any solid grounds. Was there any probability that the householders under 10*l.*, to whom his hon. Friend wished to extend the franchise, were more unworthy to exercise it than those who now possessed it? They were men who laboured assiduously every day, —who discharged faithfully all the obligations of private life—who had the greatest possible interest in the inviolability of those laws, which ensured the stability of property, and the security of the earnings of industry. Instead of having that interest which the noble Lord imputed to them of defrauding the public creditor, he maintained, that such a measure would do the working classes the greatest possible injury, and he should feel the most perfect confidence that it would meet with no approbation or acceptance from any body composed of such men as those to whom his hon. Friend wished to extend the right of suffrage. Was there any ground for accusing those persons of a want of knowledge or ability? The noble Lord had himself admitted the great ability of many of the artisans, and the general respectable character of the class, which possessed many who had acquired much knowledge both from books and by experience. He believed the noble Lord to have given a perfectly true account, and therefore he desired to see these men admitted to the elective franchise. He would remind the noble Lord that but a very small proportion of the members of the mechanics' institutes, and other seminaries for instruction were now in possession of that right, and no men could be more worthy of the privilege than those who, under heavy toils and other serious disadvantages, took so much pains to cultivate their minds, maintaining so many mechanics' institutes, and profiting by the knowledge there communicated. It was not to be supposed, that profound knowledge or a learned education was required to qualify a man for the exercise of this right. The elective franchise was at present very contracted, and it was impossible to draw any tangible line of demarcation between the competency, moral or intellectual, of the tenants of 5*l.* houses, and the tenants of 10*l.* houses. He was anxious that both limitation and extension of the franchise should be based on some reasonable principle, and that it should not be determined on vague and inadequate grounds. The representative system, as settled in 1832, was disfigured by anomalies which the noble Lord himself could not venture to defend. How did it happen, for instance, that 10*l.* householders in small boroughs, had no vote for the county in which their house was situate? Was a householder in a little town which was not a Parliamentary borough, and returned no Member, less intelligent or respectable than a 10*l.* householder in a large town like London or York, who possessed a vote? There were 1,000 such anomalies in the Reform Act, and when, in the face of all these they were told that the measure was to be as enduring as the solar system, to last *in sæcula sæculorum*, he thought it would have become the noble Lord to take a little more pains to expunge these anomalies. Into the question of universal suffrage he would not now enter. He understood his hon. Friend desired the admission of all householders under 10*l.* to the elective franchise; and the noble Lord, if he wished to sustain his refusal to admit them, and his resolution to take his stand on the integrity of the Reform Act, must make some more convincing reply to the powerful arguments of his hon. Friend. The hon. Member concluded by saying, that he should lend his support to the motion of his hon. Friend.

Mr. *D'Israeli* said, that a fallacy ran through the whole of the ingenious speech of the hon. Gentleman. The constitution of England consisted of the estates of the realm. The Commons of England in Parliament, were one of those estates. If the elective body in the country were to be an estate of the realm, it was absurd to have a House of Commons to represent the volition of the nation. When the hon. Gentleman, the Member for Kilkenny, talked of the people, he should give some definition of what he meant by the term "people." We knew what a nation was, but what did he mean by a people? The hon. Member's notion of a people was the electors of Kilkenny; that of the hon. Member for the city of London those who hallooed him on the hustings. He (Mr. D'Israeli) said, that that House, an estate of the realm, was the only representative of the Commons of England. The gentlemen who smiled or sneered at this, were sneering at the English constitution. The hon. Member for Kilkenny said, that the theory of the constitution was, that taxation and representation should go hand in hand. Where did he find that principle? In what part of the constitution did he find it? In Magna Charta—in the Bill of Rights—or in that famous Reform Bill which the hon. Member once welcomed with so much enthusiasm, and now attacked with so much causticity? The hon. Member had no definite idea of representation. He (Mr. D'Israeli) took it for granted, that the hon. Member supposed, that the principle of representation was the principle of popular election, but the principle of representation did not necessarily include election, as there might be representation without election. The Church of England was represented in the House of Lords—there was representation without election, for the bishops were not elected by the clergy. The House of Lords was quite as much a representative body as the House of Commons—as much an estate of the realm as the House of Commons, and that House was not elected. He should like, too, to have a definition of taxation by the hon. Member. If this dogma of taxation and representation going hand in hand were true, he hoped the hon. Member would not deny, that indirect taxation gave as good a claim to representation as direct taxation. If taxation was a qualification for the elective franchise, he wished to know whether indirect taxation was not, and why they should stop at household suffrage. It would be desirable also to know what the hon. Member meant by the "fundamental foundation" of his scheme. The hon. Member took a sentimental view of the politics of the country, and supposed that education would qualify persons for being electors, he would soon find, that when they got household suffrage, they would want universal suffrage, and then they would have no suffrage whatever.

Mr. *Ward* said, that the hon. Member had supposed that a fallacy had run through the very ingenious speech of his hon. friend. This was clear; that the hon. Member had pointed out a great truism, that the House of Commons is not the house of the people. This was not the only truism; he had stated another, that election and representation were not synonymous and reciprocal; which he admitted. With respect to the motion of his hon. Friend, if he had confined his notice to the first part of the resolution which he had placed on the votes, he was convinced there would have been a fuller House. Many Members had been prepared to go with his hon. Friend in his speech as to the extension of the franchise, who were not prepared to go with him as to that part which related to household suffrage. He was prepared to go with him as to household suffrage, leaving the committee to say how far that principle should extend. The noble Lord took the same ground now that he had occupied for the last five years—resolved to adhere to the finality of the measure of 1833. The noble Lord had created a new school of politicians—the finality school. He held, that the reform bill, though not to be tampered with unnecessarily or lightly, had created a tribunal, before which all measures affecting the country could be properly discussed. Before, there was a packed jury to deal with; now, there was a jury before whom there was a chance of a fair verdict. The noble Lord considered that the changes must come within the competency of the tribunal, and must not diverge from the line prescribed in 1833. But the reform bill as we now had it was not the reform bill which the noble Lord had introduced. It had been mutilated in some of its most essential parts by the amendments of the noble Lord's opponents. We had the bill with all its defects, and were told that it must be considered as a final measure; and this objection went to all matters connected with the bill, in anything relating to the reform bill, the finality principle was brought to play against them. The noble Lord had alluded to universal suffrage. He (Mr. Ward) did see grounds which ought to induce the noble Lord to pour in his hostility to this principle. He had looked pretty closely to the state of feeling in the country amongst those who were excluded from the franchise, and he saw the worst spirit amongst them, which was assuming a shape it was difficult to control, except by agreeing to a resolution like that proposed by his hon. Friend, that the House would concede to that class a share in the constituency of the country. He knew that this spirit could be kept down by physical force; but he could not look forward without apprehensions of evil to the possible violent explosion of feeling on this point. He hoped that the motion of his hon. Friend would receive the consideration to which it was so fully entitled, and he was sure that the time must come soon when the House would be forced to a consideration and an acceptance of the measure.

Mr. *P. Howard* considered that upon the whole, the Reform Act had been successful. In this great commercial country he was anxious to spare the merchants and traders a renewal of the agitation which they were subject to during the Reform Bill. He thought that any great increase of suffrage would produce still more anxiety for further extension among the non-electors. They would see themselves still nearer the goal, and they would become still more restless and dissatisfied. He believed that the desire for change had no deep root among the constituent body generally. If their opinions were taken, there would be found a very large majority in favour of the law as it at present stood.

Lord *J. Russell* was anxious to refer to two remarks which had fallen from the hon. Member for London and the hon. Member for Sheffield. The hon. Member for London had said, that he (Lord John Russell) had stated, that the inequality of representation was a defect of the Reform Bill. He certainly did not state, that it was a defect in the Reform Bill; but he had expressed his opinion, that no fair representation of the numbers, property, and intelligence of a country could be secured by the alteration proposed. The hon. Member for Sheffield had said, that he (Lord John Russell) had denied the competency of Parliament to entertain the present question. Now he had by no means denied the competency of Parliament to entertain the question, but he had said, that it would not be wise to entertain it.

Colonel *Sibthorp* thought, that the present question lay between the two parties on the other side of the House, and he had no wish to interfere between them. They were pulling against each other on the brink of a precipice, and it was a matter of perfect indifference to him which pulled the other over. As for the existing suffrage, he was rather disposed to complain that the 10*l.* qualification was general. He thought there ought rather to have been a 5*l.* qualification for some of the smaller places, and a qualification varying from 15*l.* to 20*l.*, in other places, in order to ensure a fair representation.

Mr. *O'Connell* was sorry to observe the air of ridicule which had been attempted to be thrown on this important question by some of the speeches which he had heard. The hon. Members for Carlisle and Maidstone seem disposed to treat it in a tone of grave mockery. They might attempt to treat it with ridicule, but the public at large could not be made to treat it in that way. Before the Reform Bill, as was admitted by the hon. Member for Maidstone, the people had no representation. Seats were sold in the market. Gatton was bought for 70,000*l.*, and old Sarum for 125,000*l.* Stalls in Smithfield-market were not more regularly sold than seats in that House. The intention of the Reform Bill was to transfer the power of legislating from the nominees of individuals to the representatives of the people. He hoped the hon. Member for Maidstone would not be offended with him for talking of representatives of the people. The hon. Gentleman did not choose to assume that capacity. He rather chose to take upon himself some imaginary dignity, as one of the estate of the commons, and not as a representative. He would leave the hon. Member in the undisturbed enjoyment of his new dignity. The principle of the Reform Bill gave up the nomination of a certain class of the people, and gave the power professedly to the nation at large. But how? In a most capricious and absurd way. It gave the elective franchise to persons occupying a house of 10*l.* yearly value, though such persons might really have no property, or be involved in debt or difficulties. It gave the franchise to freeholders having a particular profit, and left it with freemen by birth or servitude, though they might have no property at all. They gave it to men having this right depending on the mere accident of birth. They left it to scot and lot voters in some towns. They gave it to persons who, instead of having property belonged to the class of paupers. They refused it to persons of independence, and gave it to tenants at will, who were dependant on the breath of their landlords. They had introduced no distinct principle; while they had admitted a portion of the people for some fantastic reason, they had for reasons equally capricious excluded others. Did not the people at large know, and say now, that there was a master class which had votes, and a slave class which had not votes? Talk of property indeed! What property was more sacred than a man's physical powers and his intellect? The artisan by the exercise of these powers must earn more than 10*l.* or 20*l.* a year, or he would starve. What could be more sacred than the property which God and nature gave? Yet they excluded the intelligence of the artisan from the franchise, and while upon some imaginary and preconceived notions they admitted others, they told the working man, that he was to be excluded. Such a system could not last. Common sense and common honesty were against it. The hon. Member for Carlisle had talked of a compromise. But had there been any compromise? Who were parties to it? The Radical reformers, of whom he (Mr. O'Connell) reckoned himself one, had determined at the time of the Reform Bill to make an experiment, and see whether they could get popular government by that experiment. The moment they ascertained the failure of that experiment, they were bound to carry their principles further—and was not that failure ascertained? Look at the boroughs and counties. What were the means by which the returns were influenced. If it had not been for an absurd cry in support of the Corn-laws, and a bigot cry on religious subjects, would the Gentlemen opposite crowd the benches as at present. If the boroughs were not reduced to nearly their old state of slavery, would the opposite benches be crowded as they were with boroughmongers. It was true, they were sustained by the folly of a portion of the people. The wild ravings of the Chartists had fortified them in their abuses; but the popular sentiment could not be excluded. If those misguided men had not proclaimed principles which every honest man must abhor, which no man of conscience could do other than reprobate—if they had not used threats of physical force—if they had not become like them (the opposition) exclusionists and opponents of the rights of the middle classes, the sober, steady voice of the people of England would, before this time, have been heard proclaiming that the present plan of representation should not be continued. It excluded too many of the people; it excluded those who were as deserving of confidence, and as distinguished by integrity and intelligence, as any other in the constituent body or the legislature. For he (Mr. O'Connell) could not yield to the hon. Member for Maidstone's assumption of peculiar dignity for what he called the third estate of the realm. He saw nothing either in the hon. Member or his colleagues of that *mens divinior* which might give them a natural right to legislate for others. There was no reason why an honest and intelligent workman, who gave his leisure moments to the improvement of his mind and the increase of his intelligence, should not enjoy political power. Until that was the case, he would tell them that their Commons estate was not safe, and more even than they now refused must ultimately be yielded to pressure. When common sense and common honesty became the maxims of the masses, not only those who were now attempting to mislead them, but they (the Opposition) would be driven from the position which they had usurped and abused. The hon. Member for Maidstone seemed to be above learning the meaning of the principle of representation. He would tell the hon. Member to look into a book which was familiar to him (Mr. O'Connell), he meant "Blackstone's Commentaries," where he would find it stated, that it was robbery to levy taxes in England, unless the people of England consented to these taxes by their representatives. Blackstone talked of a virtual representation, but that was a phrase to account for the want of a real one. You struck (continued the hon. and learned Member) by the Reform Bill, the idea for a virtual representation, but you have not given a real representation. When you tax now, you rob. When you create a capital felony, you are guilty of the blood you shed, because you are not the representatives, as the hon. Member for Maidstone has candidly confessed, of the people of England. The mass of the people must have power, and their common sense and common honesty are the best securities against any robbery, either of the public creditor or of private individuals. They have an interest in it. In the artificial society of England, the great interest in maintaining the social state as it exists in the millions who depend from week to week for the subsistence of their families on their wages, they have a more deep and immediate interest in the preservation of the order, peace, and security of society, than the haughtiest aristocrat in the land, or the proudest landowner among you. The people of England are entitled to representation. Their day of delusion must shortly cease, and your day of delusion will end with it.

Mr. *T. Attwood* quite agreed with his hon. and learned Friend behind him, that very improper language had been used in many parts of England; but he was perfectly certain that the masses of English labourers were not interested in anything unjust or illegal. He was sure that they were determined to accomplish a great change, and he would stand by them and support them in effecting that change; and it would be brought about, not by any illegal measures, but peacefully, before that House continued much longer. It was true that much mischief had been done, as his hon. and learned Friend said, by violent and improper language. That language had alarmed the timid and offended the upright, the prudent, and the patriotic; but it had not discouraged the bold, the generous, and the brave. There was one thing, at all events, settled, that the Reform Bill was not a finality bill; it could not be a finality bill. He did not mean to say, that universal suffrage was absolutely certain; but he did say, that it was every year making a larger advance in the public mind. But for the intemperance of some parties, he believed that the demand for universal suffrage would be now all but universal. He must say, that if he were to decide whether we should go on as we are now, or abolish the Reform Bill, as an honest man he should vote for abolishing the Reform Bill. He thought they would be better under the boroughmongers than under that House. He knew of no good which that House had done—no generous or humane feeling which they had ever entertained towards the masses of the people of England. Perhaps that House was a representative of the aristocracy, or of the richer classes, in the sense of the hon. Member for Maidstone. He knew nothing of that; but it was no more the representative of the working classes—of the commons of England, than it was a representative of the commons of China.

The House divided:—Ayes 50; Noes 85—Majority 35.

List of the AYES.

Aglionby, H. A.
Attwood, T.
Barnard, E. G.
Bodkin, J. J.
Brotherton, J.
Butler, hon. Col.
Chalmers, P.
Codrington, Admiral
Currie, R.
Denistoun, J.
Duke, Sir J.
Duncombe, T.
Dundas, hon. J. C.
Easthope, J.
Fielden, J.
Fenton, J.
Finch, F.
Grote, G.
Hall, Sir B.
Harvey, D. W.
Hawes, B.
Hector, C. J.
Hollond, R.
Humphrey, J.
Hutt, W.
James, W.
Leader, J. T.
Lushington, C.
Muskett, G. A.
O'Connell, D.
O'Connell, M. J.
O'Connor, Don.
Pattison, J.
Power, J.
Protheroe, E.
Rundle, J.
Salwey, Col.
Somers, J. P.
Style, Sir C.
Tancred, H. W.
Turner, E.
Villiers, hon. C. P.
Wallace, R.
Warburton, H.
Ward, H. G.
White, A.
Wilde, Sergeant
Williams, W.
Wood, Sir M.
Yates, J. A.

TELLERS.

Hume, J.
Johnson, General

List of the NOES.

Abercromby, hn. G.R.
Ainsworth, P.
Baillie, Colonel
Baring, F. T.
Barrington Viscount
Barry, G. S.
Blair, J.
Blennerhassett, A.
Broadley, H.
Bruges, W. H.
Campbell, Sir J.
Canning, rt. hn. Sir S.
Cayley, E. S.
Copeland, Alderman
Courtenay, P.
Curry, W.
D'Israeli, B.
Douglas, Sir C. E.
East, J. B.
Egerton, W. T.
Elliot, hon. J. E.
Ellis, J.
Forester, hon. G.
Fremantle, Sir T.
Freshfield, J. W.
Gaskell, J. M.
Gladstone, W. E.
Gordon, R.
Goulburn, rt. hon. H.
Grimsditch, T.
Guest, Sir J.
Halford, H.
Hastie, A.
Heneage, G. W.
Hodgson, R.
Hope, hon. C.
Hope, G. W.
Hotham, Lord
Howard, P. H.
Howick, Lord
Jones, J.
Jones, Captain
Kemble, H.
Lascelles, hon. W. S.
Law, hon. C. E.
Lefroy, rt. hon. T.
Lockhart, A. M.
Lowther, J. H.
Mackenzie, T.
Maule, hon. F.
Maunsell, T. P.
Mordaunt, Sir J.
Morpeth, Viscount
Murray, A.
Norreys, Lord
Packe, C. W.
Palmer, G.
Parker, R. T.
Pease, J.
Perceval, Colonel
Perceval, hon. G. J.
Pinney, W.
Rice, rt. hon. T. S.
Richards, R.
Rolfe, Sir R. M.
Round, C. G.
Russell, Lord J.
Sandon Viscount
Shaw, right hon. F.
Smith, R. V.
Stanley, E. J.
Stanley, Lord
Stuart, Lord J.
Stuart, V.
Stock, Dr.
Teignmouth, Lord
Tennent, J. E.
Thompson, Alderman
Tollemache, F. J.
Troubridge, Sir E. T.
Vere, Sir C. B.
Vivian, J. E.
Wood, C.
Wood, T.
Young, J.

TELLERS.

Seymour, Lord
Parker, J.

RAILROADS IN IRELAND.] Mr. *F. French* said, that in calling the attention of the House to the subject of which he had given notice, he assured them no person could be more desirous than he was to do full and ample justice to the report of the railway commissioners, to acknowledge the mass of statistical information that it contained, and the fair and open manner in which the commissioners had placed before the public the data from whence their conclusions had been drawn; and he was fully prepared to admit, notwithstanding the objections to which it was liable, that their report was by far the most valuable that any of the numerous commissions on Irish subjects had produced. The commissioners had shown with great ability the circumstances peculiar to the situation of Ireland and its inhabitants, which rendered the promotion of these works an object of national importance, and their suggestions as to the means and manner in which their projects should be carried into execution, their exposé of the evils which had resulted, and which was likely to result, from the exorbitant powers already conferred on the railway companies in this country, and their observations on the principles on which all future railway bills should be framed, were worthy of the most serious attention. Railways were about to become the highways of the nation, and therefore the choice of their lines, their mode of construction, the rules by which they should be governed, and the regulations to which they should be subject, had become matters of paramount national importance. He (Mr. French) had read with deep interest the powerful manner in which the commissioners imposed upon Government the necessity of affording extensive assistance towards developing the now dormant resources of Ireland, and but for the melancholy experience of the past, in all that related to that country, could never have entertained a doubt that their views would speedily be carried into effect; but he confessed until he read the report of the speech of his noble Friend the Secretary for Ireland, he had no expectation that even a portion of the report would have been acted on. Hitherto, although Government had assented to inquiry on all subjects connected with the improvement of Ireland, they had uniformly disregarded all recommendations for that purpose, whether proceeding from commissioners appointed by themselves, or from Committees of the House of Commons, on the subject of the reclamation of the waste lands of Ireland. They had the reports of the commissioners appointed by the Crown in 1809, of committees of that House in 1819 and 1830, all concurring in its practicability and the policy of its being promoted by the State; and notwithstanding that these reports had been backed by the strong argument of national interest, tested and shown by the extraordinary increase of revenue which had uniformly followed such improvements, no steps had been taken towards its accomplishment. They had reports on reports, and recommendations on recommendations, from committees and commissioners, as to the necessity of the improvement of the Shannon being undertaken by the State, a national work, in the words of Colonel Burgoyne, to be accomplished only by national means; if any steps were to be taken towards giving to the nation the benefit of the navigation of this splendid river—the principle to be acted on was one which would, he feared, render the bill, if indeed, it was ever to be introduced, wholly inoperative—a principle which had originated with the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and which was in direct opposition to the recommendations of the committee which inquired into and the commissioners who surveyed and reported on the state of the river, the report of the committee on public works, which sat in 1835, moulded as it was to meet the views of the right hon. Gentleman, might, for all the benefit likely to accrue from it, as well never have been made. The intimation of the introduction of an extensive system of public works appeared, until the statement of his noble Friend, to be altogether forgotten. These and other circumstances, which he should not detain the House by enumerating, had led him to the conclusion that neglect would also have been the portion of this report. He (Mr. French) was glad he was in error as to the intention of her Majesty's Government, and regretted that he could not tender his support to the proposition of his noble Friend, being convinced that Government had but one of two courses to pursue—to give general assistance or none at all. Even the latter course would be more for the advantage of Ireland than the partial measure they proposed. The check which the publication of the report had given to private enterprise would be removed, and the lines which had been for some time before the public would be executed or abandoned, as the prospect of immediate remuneration appeared favourable or otherwise. Since 1817, 6,500,000*l*. had been devoted to the promotion of public works in the United Kingdom. Of this sum, 6,250,000*l.* had fallen to the lot of England, and but 250,000*l.* to that of Ireland. Loans to the extent of twelve millions had been sanctioned by the Exchequer Loan Commissioners for Great Britain, whilst from the limited nature of the funds entrusted to the Commissioners of Public Works in Ireland, the entire amount in that country was but 730,000*l.* Great assistance was given to the former country, which, on a former occasion, he had shown possessed in a portion of it equal in size to Ireland upwards of 4,000 miles of inland navigation; Ireland had altogether but 400. They would find by the report of Lieutenant Harness, that she annually forwarded to her ports 2,225,000 tons of agricultural produce for exportation on cars in the primitive fashion of the country. The want of the means of internal communication was universally admitted to be one of the chief causes of her miseries; and yet three-fourths of the country were to be excluded from the benefit of the proposed measure of her Majesty's Government. Was this view politic or prudent? To give assistance and encouragement to public works could not, he contended, be considered on the part of Government an act of grace or benevolence: it was one of justice and sound policy; their own interests called for it. Much as he was disposed to give credit to the commissioners for their ability and research, there were two conclusions at which they had arrived from which he totally dissented, and which, as they appeared to influence materially the motion on this subject of his noble Friend the Secretary for Ireland, he could not pass over in silence. The first was their choice of a port, as a point of departure for America; the second, the policy of excluding one-fourth part of Ireland from the benefits derivable from the introduction of railways into that country. As to the first, he was prepared to show, did he deem it necessary—which at present he did not—that their choice of a port had not been a judicious one, and that they had passed over in total silence ports possessing far greater claims than Tarbert to the position in which they had so prominently placed it. If there was one portion of Ireland which required the assistance of Government and the advantages of railroads more than another, that portion was Connaught. It was so peculiarly situated, that the voyage from its shores with agricultural produce was most dangerous and difficult, whether northward by the North Channel, or southward by Cape Clear. A vessel sailing from a port in Connaught for Liverpool, and taking the passage northward, had a dangerous navigation to contend with of upwards of 500 miles, if southward, 850, while the distance from the centre of Connaught across Ireland was but 240 miles. A railway from Dublin to Connaught would give to that district the most direct and quickest transit to the first market in the world; its inexhaustible fisheries from Galway to Donegal would be made profitable; and the latter, from its rich pastures, would in all probability secure to it a million of money, now annually expended by Great Britain in foreign countries for that article. He (Mr. French) was aware that it had been urged, and that England had been referred to in proof of the soundness of the theory, that the construction of works for the benefit of the public might be safely left to private speculators, because private interest calculated most accurately the works that were likely to prove successful speculations; that their not being undertaken by private enterprise, was a proof they were not likely to be remunerative undertakings, and that it was the duty of Government to regulate and control rather than to originate them; this might be a proper rule with respect to England, but it did not, he contended, admit of general extension, and to no country in the world was it less applicable than to Ireland, which essentially required the stimulus that Government could alone give to develop her great natural resources. When society would derive a benefit from a great national work, which private interest might not consider a sufficiently tempting speculation, or which it might not possess the means to accomplish, he held it to be the duty of Government which represented the general interest to be the undertaker, and in proof of this position, he could refer to any country in modern times, where civilization had extended — to France, where, by means of the national funds, the Mediterranean was joined to the ocean; to Russia, where in like manner, St. Petersburgh was united to the Caspian, by a complete chain of inland navigation; to Holland, where an opulent state was raised from a marsh; to Germany, the Netherlands, to every state in Europe, to prove that to facilitate the intercourse between district and district, to lessen the expense of carriage, and thus to afford means to develope internal wealth, and distribute the productions of labour, had ever been held to be an object of national concern, and that in each of these countries the national funds had been applied to this purpose to an extent that was only limited by the national resources. Let them for a moment suppose that the different states in Europe had declined to construct common roads until it might suit the interest of private individuals to undertake them, in contemplation of the traffic by which they would be remunerated. How, he would ask, had the march of civilization been stayed? Railroads were as necessary at present as common roads in the infancy of society, and their construction had become as great an object of importance to the community. He could not agree with some hon. Members, that an outlay on public works must, as a matter of course, be an unproductive one to the state: he believed the very reverse to be the fact. He held in his hand several very interesting calculations which had been made by the French engineers, as to the advantage derived by the public compared to that derived by the undertakers, from public works. Having referred to the works of M. Vaille and M. Favrier, he proceeded to say, that occupation, which was now inaccessible, and almost unknown, was as certain as that it would afford them present employment, with the certainty of such fruits springing from the judicious outlay of public capital. Surely it would be only acting in the true spirit of the professions of her Majesty's Government, and the strict letter of its duty, to devote a portion of the national revenue, and that on no narrow or sordid scale to this great national object; it was, however, necessary that the measure should be a general one, that the benefits derivable from it should not be confined to one district, but that every quarter of Ireland, north, east, west, and south, should equally partake of its advantages, all of which could be considered, by the adoption of a different system, be obtained without a larger advance of money than that proposed by her Majesty's Government. He would at present confine himself by moving, that an humble address be presented to her Majesty, praying that she will direct measures to be taken to secure to every province in Ireland the advantages of railway communication.

Upon the question being put, an hon. Member moved, that the House be counted, and forty Members not being present, it was adjourned till to-morrow.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Friday, March 22, 1839.

MINUTES.] Petitions presented. By the Earl of HADDINGTON, from several places, for Church Extension in Scotland.—By Lord BROUGHAM, from a number of places, against the Beer-laws; from five places, for the Repeal of the Corn-laws; from Maryford for a Uniform Penny Postage; from Inverkeithing, against any further Endowment to the Church of Scotland; from Wellington, for some plan of National Education.—By the Earl of SHAFTESBURY, from Greenwood, against any plan of National Education not founded on the principles of the Established Church.

GOVERNMENT OF IRELAND—EXPLANATION.] The Marquess of *Normanby* seeing the noble Earl (Earl Roden) in his place, who had last night carried a motion for a Committee to inquire into the state of Ireland, and who had published a list of the Committee in which his (the Marquess of Normanby's) name appeared, wished to say with reference to that list that he was anxious for the noble Earl to name another person in his stead, as he did not think that it would be his duty or that it would be desirable in any way that he should take part in that inquiry. Having stated this, he would correct a mistake as to a matter of fact made by a noble and learned Lord near him (Lord Brougham) in the debate of last night. As to the fact he would not have dissented from the statement of the noble and learned Lord unless he had felt pretty certain of the grounds on which he had proceeded, and if he had not been aware that the noble and learned Lord possessed a knowledge of certain facts at a certain period. He understood the noble and learned Lord to say that when the motion of the noble Earl opposite was made in 1837, relative to his tour in Ireland in 1836, he was not aware of certain circumstances and certain proceedings, which had since come to his knowledge, or that being aware of the circumstances, yet that it appeared everything was done with the sanction of a judge, and that, therefore, they were not particularly adverted to; and that, therefore, the noble and learned Lord had been saved the pain of making those observations, which if the circumstances had then been brought prominently forward, he should have felt himself called upon to make. First, then, as to the knowledge of the noble and learned Lord, for which he had been indebted to the assistance of his new ally the noble Marquess (the Marquess of Westmeath), and as to his acquaintance with the facts of the case at the time. The noble Marquess, as he understood, had said that the return of these cases were not then on the Table of the House. That was the nature of the assistance which the noble and learned Lord's new ally was prepared to give. Now, it was rather singular that it was the noble Marquess who had called the noble and learned Lord's attention to these cases, of which he had last night stated he had no recollection whatever; and this not upon the occasion referred to, but five months before, and within ten months after the events themselves had taken place. This would appear by the speeches delivered by the noble Lords themselves in the debates on the two motions in July and in November of the following year:—In the discussion in the House of Lords, on the 11th of July, 1837, when the conduct of the Irish government was considered, the Marquess of Westmeath "could not avoid saying a few words upon one part of the case, though it had on more than one occasion been previously discussed in that House: he meant the exercise of the royal prerogative of mercy. He begged to read the number of pardons of all kinds given by the noble Earl, and the offences of the parties. There were twenty-seven persons under sentence of death discharged—of three of these the day of execution was fixed—two cases of murder, and one of conspiracy to murder. He was well acquainted with the latter case, as it happened in a county which he knew well. It was the case of John Lynch, who suffered two years' imprisonment. Of the twenty-seven under sentence of death, three were for highway robbery, ten for abduction, six for rape, four for robbery, and one for malicious assault. For not one of these was bail taken on their discharge, except the man for malicious assault. There were also discharged thirty-three prisoners under sentence of transportation for life, and from only two of them was bail required. Two were discharged under sentence of fourteen years' transportation, but no bail given. Sixty-three were discharged under sentence of seven years—bail taken from six. For other and minor offences the numbers discharged were 900—making in all 1,086 cases; and out of these bail was taken in only forty-one. He must say, if the Government allowed that misjudging Earl to return to Ireland as the head of the Government there, they would be seriously tampering with the peace and good order of society in it." In reply to this statement, he then had told the noble Marquess, "that he had confounded the two sorts of cases—the minor cases, in which the parties were discharged on certificates; and the graver, which were always referred to the judges. He said that the noble Marquess had put into his returns not only all the persons discharged upon the recommendation of the inspectors, but also all those discharged on the recommendation of the judges—on medical certificates, and for other reasons. The noble Marquess had gone through a long list of persons improperly liberated, who had been convicted for murders and aggravated assaults. He would repeat, what he had before stated, that none charged with grave and serious offences had been liberated, except upon medical certificates, without reference to the authorities who presided at the trials. He believed that it was impossible for the power of language to have gone further for the purpose of misrepresentation, than it had on this subject. Much must always depend upon the peculiar circumstances of each case; and it was only with reference to them that a proper judgment was attainable. He could say that of all the prisoners discharged on the recommendation of the inspectors, only nineteen had been recommitted, and those for minor offences, such as throwing stones, &c." Lord Brougham took part in the debate, and said distinctly: 'I beg to remind your Lordships, that the gravest of all the charges preferred against my Friend, the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland is, that of releasing from prison an individual who was lying there, ordered for execution, under sentence of the judges. That charge is disposed of for ever. It turns out that all this was done at the recommendation of the learned judge who tried the man, and who, on consideration, was of opinion that the conviction was wrong, and could not stand. . . . . In reply to the noble Marquess, my noble Friend (Lord Mulgrave) has entered into a full, ample, and satisfactory defence of his own conduct. . . . . To the charges brought against my noble Friend of the state of crime in

1835 and 1836, he has, by anticipation, given a satisfactory answer, by pointing to the state of crime in 1837. . . . The Lord Lieutenant of Ireland has conceived that with a judicious system of lenity;" so that the noble and learned Lord, by his own words, showed that he was alluding to precisely the same transactions as were mentioned last night. The noble and learned Lord continued: 'With an appeal to the good feeling and hearts of the people—with a wish to make his Government popular, it is necessary to exhibit a firm determination to see the laws executed, and to provide sufficient means for fulfilling the objects in the completest way.'" That was the noble and learned Lord's statement on the accusation, which had been made on precisely the same cases; the noble and learned Lord had then said that there was a full defence, and yet allusion was made that night to the same circumstances precisely as had been referred to last night. All these cases were included in the returns of 1836, and he thought that he had established the fact of the noble and learned Lord's knowledge at the time of the former motion. Next, with respect to the second question, the noble and learned Lord's statement, that the matter was not in 1837 brought prominently forward. The noble and learned Lord's forbearance had been extended, till he had ceased to administer the government of Ireland; but now, after three years had elapsed, the noble and learned Lord was tardily urged forward by an irresistible sense of public duty to condemn acts, which were not merely incidentally mentioned in the former debates, but which were urged prominently. In the House of Lords on 27th November, 1838, in the debate on the state of Ireland, the Earl of Roden said, "The great and ultimate object of the disturbances in Ireland was the destruction of Protestant life and property, and the extermination of the Protestant religion. Those things he would prove by the papers for which he meant to move, and when they were laid before their Lordships, if submitted to a committee, he thought there would be no difference of opinion with regard to the state of Ireland." Lord Donoughmore said that "crime in Ireland was on the increase. At the same time he begged to say he made no charge against the noble Earl (Earl Mulgrave) of not suppressing that which did exist, or of causing that increase by neglecting to carry the common law of the land vigorously and strenuously into execution," and the Duke of Wellington made specific reference to it, when he said that "the noble Earl (Earl Mulgrave) had gone into a long argument to show that there had been an increased number of committals in proportion to the number of offences, and an increased number of convictions in proportion to the number of committals. He admitted and gave the noble Earl every credit for that fact . . . But he begged to call the attention of the House to this fact. The noble Earl made his tour through Ireland, and crime having thus increased he thought proper to exercise the royal prerogative of mercy to the extent of pardoning not less than about 1,300 persons . . . . He would ask the noble Earl had he carried the law into execution against persons whom the law had justly condemned? Did he ever pardon people who ought to have the law carried into execution upon them? Had there not been some little seeking of popularity besides that which ought to result from the performance of the great duties and judicial functions he was called on to execute?" He then said that, "with regard to the exercise of the prerogative of mercy he would say (in round numbers) that out of 800 memorials which had been examined by him, about one-half had been decided unfavourably to the prisoner, after reference to the judge or without it, and only 100 in favour of the prisoners without reference to the judge, but on the authority of medical or other certificates. The only class towards whom leniency had been shown in a wholesale way, were persons convicted of joining Orange processions." These circumstances were then brought prominently forward, and he was actually congratulated by the noble and learned Lord. [Lord *Brougham*: I congratulated myself.] Undoubtedly the noble and learned Lord congratulated himself also that no prominent mention was made of these circumstances, for he had been spared the task of making observations which would otherwise have been forced upon him. After this the noble and learned Lord stated that if the circumstances had been mentioned, he had not attended to them, or he might have been asleep. The noble and learned Lord might or might not have been asleep.

Lord *Brougham*: If, my Lords, I said that I was asleep I apprehend that I might have been so; but not that I had not been asleep.

The Marquess of *Normanby*: If the

noble and learned Lord said that he was asleep, no doubt he was so; but in that very debate the noble and learned Lord again taking part in the debate, said, that "the noble Earl opposite (Donoughmore) had allowed his (Lord Brougham's) noble Friend, (Lord Mulgrave) had done every thing in his power to enforce the common law of the land:' so that the noble and learned Lord attended both to the speaker and to the subject of the debate. He went on to say 'that he had been lavish of the power confided to him; that he had sent constables to the disturbed districts; had commissioned magistrates; in short, that all had been done by his noble Friend which man could do to enforce the common law of the land . , . . He had no fears for his noble Friend, for he was persuaded that he would conduct his Government in future as he had hitherto done, and that his policy would continue as creditable to himself as beneficial to Ireland." He thought it unnecessary to say one word in addition to these details, and it was on the recollection of these statements that he ventured to interpose last night. The noble and learned Lord said last night that if he had attended more to the debate he might have heard the reference, but the subject was noticed, especially by the Duke of Wellington; and he thought that any thing falling from the noble Duke was of importance, and that any thing that he touched upon at any length, might be considered as forming a prominent part in the debate. In his opinion the noble and learned Lord, throughout his whole speech last night, proceeded on the assumption that the prisoners were released only on occasion of a triumphant progress, and that it was a part of his system of increasing his popularity, to liberate certain prisoners; but this point he did explain, though doubtless the noble and learned Lord was asleep—that in a particular district finding a certain train of circumstances, he had, on the recommendation of the assistant barrister, thought that the rigours of the law might be relaxed, and he had exercised the royal prerogative of mercy. In the course of his visits to other parts of the country where he found the same circumstances, he did apply the same principle, and he did thus towards prisoners thus recommended, and who were near the end of their sentences, grant like lenity. The House and the noble and learned Lord were very indignant at this; but with all deference for the opinion of the noble and learned Lord he could not agree that no prisoner should be discharged, unless in every other part of Ireland prisoners similarly situated should be also liberated. If, however, the noble and learned Lord meant that he ought not on his visit to any town to apply principles which he would not have otherwise put into operation, he perfectly agreed with the noble Lord. His noble and learned Friend behind him (Lord Plunket) would bear him out in saying that he was convinced he ought not to exercise the royal prerogative of mercy in a different manner in the one case than in the other; and if no recommendations had been made, he had told the parties on his visit that if they would mention any case worthy of the royal clemency, he would make the best inquiries he could in the short time allowed him of the local magistrates and of the inspectors, and act on their advice. He agreed, therefore, and he had acted on the opinion that because he had visited particular spots, they ought to receive no greater indulgence than if he had not visited them. He had made this explanation with considerable pain; friendships of twenty years standing were not broken lightly; the feelings he entertained with respect to politics differed from the opinion of many noble Lords whom he had always called his friends; indeed, he had the honour to possess friends on every side of the House, but he felt bound to say that he thought the noble and learned Lord had not used in this matter that sincerity with which he ought to have acted.

Lord *Brougham* felt very sincere and unfeigned pain at the last sentence which had fallen from the noble Marquess, that in consequence of what had passed he had withdrawn his friendship from him. To him it was matter of great grief, and he most solemnly, frankly, and sincerely assured their Lordships that he had heard the last sentence with great sorrow. He felt some consolation, however, in thinking, that he had done nothing to forfeit his claim to the noble Marquess's friendship. The noble Marquess chose to talk lightly of this matter, and in a manner little suited to the importance, and he might add, the solemnity of the occasion; but to him it was no light matter, for he had been acting strictly in accordance with his feelings, and he had been impelled to the course he had taken in the discharge of his duty. He would appeal to those who, for the last fifteen months, had known his feelings, whether he had expressed more than he felt. He might have said nothing, and he might have kept his peace. He found that he had made a mistake, and he congratulated himself last night, that for fifteen months he had not been called upon to notice it. Last night, however, was not the first time he had, in the discharge of his public duty, been forced to criticise, to comment upon, and even to attack the government of the noble Marquess. The noble Marquess talked as if something had come over him last night; but was there not any previous attack? Why, what had become of the motion respecting the appointments of the sheriffs in Ireland? he had fought that strongly, not last night, and not lately, but a year ago. Having lived on intimate terms with the noble Lord for many years, it was painful for him to reflect that their intimacy should be broken off at once; he trusted not for ever. After the speech he had made in the month of June all intimacy had been broken off for some weeks—they did not even speak. Why did he revert to these painful circumstances? Because he hoped that the momentary feeling, that the temporary prejudice under which the noble Marquess laboured, would pass from his mind; for the noble Marquess's mind had been oppressed by prejudice when he felt that he could not associate with him for several weeks. But with that generosity which was the characteristic of generous minds, the noble Marquess had overcome his feeling for

> "Inimicitiæ mortales, amicitiæ sempiternæ."

And he felt that the present difference would be put an end to, and he hoped that nothing of feeling would last longer now than it did upon the late occasion. With respect to the facts, he must beg pardon of their Lordships for his want of memory, and for his tendency to sleep; he frequently had to thank noble Lords opposite, and, perhaps, as frequently the noble Lords near him, for helping him to this state. He did not get up at two or three o'clock in the afternoon, but he had been up ever since six o'clock in the morning; he had been engaged in judicial business during the day with the noble and learned Lord on the woolsack, who had, doubtless, also slept last night, for no debate, except indeed a debate on the Corn-laws, could be duller. He had been in the House from ten in the morning till ten at night. He did not think, however, that he had been long asleep before he was awoken by the appeal of the noble Marquess. As to the facts that had passed in 1837, he had not in the end of November taken the same part that he did in July. He was in July satisfied that the Judge had been applied to, and he thought that he had used even stronger language than had been quoted; he believed that he had said, there was evidence of the discharge resulting from the humane feeling of the noble Marquess, and that he had triumphantly vindicated himself in his defence that night. But of all that took place in 1836, when he was absent from the House, and took little part in public affairs, he was very ignorant. It was during that period that the noble Marquess made his tour out of which these circumstances arose, and he declared, that the words "gaol delivery," or "gaol delivery tour," had never fallen on his ears till two days after the debate in which he had taken part. He had been referred by the noble Marquess opposite (Marquess of Westmeath) to some papers or statements as to the case alluded to, and he had found that the case assumed a very different aspect to what it bore from the casual manner in which it was mentioned on the first night. He had hence been led to believe, that other cases might be as bad as the one which from the subsequent information he had better understood. He felt, therefore, that he might have committed himself further than he ought to have done in his position. Nothing was more entirely consistent than these facts with the statement he had made, that though he had taken this part in July, he was glad that the same question was not pressed in the November following. As to the reference made to this part of the question by the noble Duke, it did not appear, even from the extract which the noble Marquess had read, that he had made it a prominent part in the former debate; but from what they had heard last night, the facts on this part of the case were made the foundation of the motion on which the House was to determine whether they would interfere with a high prerogative, and inquire how mercy had been exercised by the representative of the Crown in Ireland. What, however, was the accusation that the noble Marquess made against him? That a year and a half ago he had made for him a defence which he did not now make. A stranger charge he had never heard. It was ridiculous. The complaint of the noble Marquess was, that he (Lord Brougham) attacked him last night, but did not attack him a year and a-half ago. Now what he said last night was this: that the mere circumstance of the noble Marquess making a progress through Ireland, was no ground whatever for discharging prisoners from the gaols of the country; the barbarous practice of letting loose prisoners during a royal progress having been abolished ever since the time of the Plantagenets. When George 4th went to Edinburgh and Dublin, being the first time that any King of the Brunswick line had ever visited those places, or that a British King had ever visited Edinburgh since the Union, did any mortal either in Dublin or Edinburgh ever dream of letting out prisoners from the prisons of Dublin and not from those of Cork, or from the prisons of Edinburgh, and not from those of Aberdeen? What he had, therefore, said, was, that the mere circumstance of the Viceroy of Ireland going to Limerick or to Cashel, was no reason for liberating prisoners from the gaols of those places. It was as painful to him as it could possibly have been to the noble Marquess to make such observations, but he was reluctantly compelled to defend himself.

The Marquess of *Westmeath* concurred with the noble and learned Lord, as to the nature of the return which had been produced. At the time he moved for certain papers, there were no returns before their Lordships relating to these transactions, and the facts which he then stated were taken from a return laid before the House of Commons. The bad effects of these enlargements of convicted criminals had now appeared, and the noble and learned Lord having paid attention to the statements which had been made, and having observed that the effect of the policy pursued by the Government in Ireland had been to dissolve society into its elements, it was very natural that the noble and learned Lord should have taken the course which he did yesterday evening.

The Earl of *Roden* had felt it his duty to place the name of the Marquess of Normanby on the Committee, and still hoped that the noble Marquess would allow his name to remain on it.

The Marquess of *Normanby* begged to state that his objection continued.

On the motion of the Earl of *Roden* the name of the Duke of Richmond was added to the Committee.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Friday, March 22, 1839.

MINUTES.] Bills. Read a first time:—Mutiny; Registration of Voters (Ireland); Polls at Elections (Ireland).—Read a second time:—Election Petitions Trial; Ecclesiastical Appointments Suspension.—Read a third time:—Duke of Wellington's Estate.

Petitions presented. By Sir MATTHEW WOOD, Mr. Alderman COPELAND, and Sir G. CLERK, from several parts of the City of London, against the City of London Police Bill.—By Mr. WALLACE, Lord J. STEUART, Mr. GILLON, and Mr. CHALMERS, from a number of places, against any further Grant to the Church of Scotland.—By Mr. COLQUHOUN, and Sir G. CLERK, from two or three places, for further Grants to the Church of Scotland.—By Lord JAMES STUART, and Mr. BARNARD, from Ayr, and Greenwich, against the system of Licensing Public Houses.—By the Marquess of DOURO, from Norwich, against the Ecclesiastical Duties and Revenues Bill; also against the Registration Act.—By Mr. AGLIONBY, from Maryport, and Mr. GROTE, from Harlow, and Epping, in favour of a Uniform Penny Postage.—By Mr. BUCK, and Sir J. Y. BULLER, from two places, against the Repeal of the Corn-laws.—By Mr. VILLIERS, from two places, for the Repeal of the Corn-laws.—By Mr. O'CONNELL, from several places, for Justice to Ireland.

GOVERNMENT OF IRELAND.] Lord *John Russell* said, I rise to move the postponement of some of the Orders of the Day, and first of all, the committal of the Municipal Corporations (Ireland) Bill, which I propose shall be taken on Monday, the 15th of April. In moving this postponement, I will take this opportunity of stating to the House, that it is my intention, in the very first week after the recess, and on one of the first days after the holidays shall cease, to ask for the opinion of the House with respect to the government of Ireland in late years. It appears by the minutes of proceedings of the House of Lords, that that House of Parliament, at an early hour this morning, appointed a Select Committee to inquire into the state of Ireland since 1835, in respect of the crimes and outrages which had rendered life and property insecure in that part of the empire. Now, without wishing to enter into an argument with respect to the propriety of appointing that Committee, which it does not become me, particularly at this time, to enter into, I think it is obvious that the appointment of such a Committee, fixing the date of the commencement of the inquiry in the year 1835, and directing the investigation to be made upon the subject of crime and outrage, and the insecurity of life and property, must induce a general belief throughout the empire, and more especially in that part of the country which it affects, that it is intended to transfer the executive government of Ireland to a select committee of one House of Parliament; and that it is more especially intended to call into question the exercise of one of the highest prerogatives of the Crown—the exercise of the prerogative of mercy, by calling witnesses before the House. I do not say that there may not be circumstances which may justify such a course—I do not say, at this moment, whether there are or are not—and I will not enter into the question whether the House of Lords may not have had arguments adduced before them to justify them to adopt such a course; but this I must say, that no person can proceed to carry on the government of Ireland, as Lord-lieutenant of that part of the United Kingdom, without being assured whether it is the intention of the House of Commons that those principles which have governed the administration of Ireland since 1835 should be adhered to, or whether they should be now abandoned. In conformity with the declaration which Lord Melbourne has made at various times, but in conformity, more particularly, with one especial declaration of that noble Lord, that he held office only so long as he retained the confidence of the House of Commons, I think it incumbent upon me, not leaving it to any other Member of Parliament, who may not be connected with the Government, to bring the question to an issue directly—whether this House adheres to the principle upon which the administration of the government of Ireland has been conducted. I am perfectly aware, that with respect to legislative measures, there have been cases which have induced this House to object to certain measures which we ourselves thought ought to be adopted, and we have not been able to carry them through Parliament, but then we have been able to do certainly—we have been able, with the confidence, as I believe, of one House, and with the forbearance of the other, to carry on the administration of Ireland in a way which we thought would conduce to the peace and prosperity of that part of the empire. It is on this question, then, that I shall think it necessary to ask the opinion of this House—whether it is disposed to approve of my noble Friend, Lord Ebrington, who is about to proceed as Lord-lieutenant to that country, continuing to maintain and execute the law in the same manner as hitherto; and he will do so if this House is pleased to agree with the Ministers upon that subject; but if it shall not be pleased to approve of the continuance of this plan, and the House think that it shall now be abandoned, and that other principles shall be adopted and maintained, in that case it will be our duty to relinquish into other hands the government of this country.

Other Orders of the day postponed. The House went into a Committee of

SUPPLY—ARMY ESTIMATES.] Viscount *Howick* then rose to make his statement upon the subject of the army estimates. He said, that in answer to a question put to him on a former evening by the right hon. Gentleman, he had stated, that he should this evening move for the remainder of the amount of the vote which he first moved, and he should, in accordance with the intention which he had expressed, proceed to make his general statement as to the difference which existed between the estimates he had this year the honour of laying on the Table of the House, and those which he had proposed on former years. Those hon. Gentlemen who were in the habit of attending to this subject, must be aware, that in a mere regimental establishment, there was little difference of importance between the estimates of this and any preceding years. The apparent change in the number of cavalry proposed, arose from the circumstance of a regiment of cavalry being ordered to India, in order to increase the establishment there; and in the same manner there was also an apparent increase in the Cape corps, which resulted from the transfer to the establishment of the corps, of so much as it has been found necessary to retain of the provincial force, which was raised during the Caffre war, and which has hitherto been provided for by a supplemental estimate. The charge for the increase of the regimental establishment would amount altogether to 29,700*l.*; but the greater part of that increase was merely nominal, inasmuch as a large proportion consisted of cavalry about to proceed to India, the expense of which would fall upon the East India Company. But, although apparently there was little difference in the regimental establishment of this year compared with former years, he felt bound to inform the House that there was a very considerable difference as to the real amount of force, for the expense of which they were this year called upon to provide, compared with that of former years. In the estimates of two years ago, a reduction was made of five men to each troop of cavalry, and of eight men to each company of infantry. A similar decrease took place in the West-Indian regiments. The real force proposed to be kept up two years ago was, as he stated at the time, 8,036 below that which was voted upon the regimental establishment. In the course of last year, in consequence of the disturbances which took place in Canada, it was found necessary to increase that force to some extent. Accordingly the whole of the cavalry was completed to a full establishment, as were in like manner all those regiments serving in North America; five men being added to each troop of cavalry, and eight men to each company of these regiments of infantry. The increase which was thus effected last year in consequence of the disturbances was 2,263 men, but beyond this in moving the estimates for that year he had stated to the House, that it might be necessary, before Parliament should be again called upon to discuss the army estimates, to make a further augmentation of the army. Accordingly, to provide for this contingency instead of deducting the whole amount of the charge of that proportion of each regiment, which it was then proposed to keep non-effective a smaller diminution only was made, so as to give the Government the power at the latter end of the year, should circumstances require it, to make a further augmentation by completing the regiments which were still kept upon the reduced establishment. In the years 1837-38 a reduction had been made from the regimental charge of 181,000*l.*, on account of non-effective men, which was last year reduced to 110,000*l.*, and of the power with which Government had been thus invested use had been made during the last winter. In consequence of the renewed disturbances in Canada, it was deemed expedient, in the month of December last, to give directions that all infantry regiments should be raised to complete establishments, in the same manner as had been already done with those serving in North America. This would create an augmentation of 5,648 men. He ought also to inform the House that, in comparing the present force with that which had been maintained two years ago, there was a further addition to be considered. Some considerable time ago his attention had been attracted to the state of the recruiting for regiments abroad. It had been the practice to recruit only for vacancies actually reported in the ranks of regiments on foreign service, and as fresh casualties had always occurred before the first had in this manner been supplied, the army, was constantly kept below its estimated strength. This circumstance having been brought by me under the notice of the Government, it was considered advisable to take measures for keeping the army more nearly up to its estimated strength, and that recruiting should go on, not merely for the vacancies which had actually occurred, but in anticipation of those vacancies which might be expected from a comparison of the usual averages in former years. Accordingly the Commander-in-chief had been directed to recruit 1,500 men in anticipation. The result, therefore, was, that last year an increase had been made by completing, to their full establishments, the whole of the cavalry and the infantry regiments serving in North America, of 2,263; that there was a further addition of 1,500, which he had just alluded to, and that by completing those regiments of infantry of the line which had not been previously completed to full establishments, but which it was deemed necessary to do, in furtherance of the measures which had been in progress since December, there would be a further increase of 5,648 rank and file; making a total increase of the army, as compared with former years, of 9,411 men; and, of course, a proportionate diminution in the deduction usually made on account of non-effective men. The right hon. Gentleman opposite (Sir H. Hardinge) had asked him a few nights ago whether the estimates now proposed would cover the whole increase which it was the intention of Government to make in the army. In answer to that question he had to say, that those estimates did provide for the increase which at the time they were prepared the Government had conceived to be necessary. It had, however, since then been found expedient to make some further augmentation of the forces in India; but, as the right hon. Gentleman was well aware, that augmentation would not create any additional charge upon this country, and therefore did not require to be provided for by a supplementary estimate. The increase would be one chiefly, if not entirely, of rank and file, and of additions to regiments already serving in that country; but in whatever manner that augmentation should take place, it would not be necessary to provide for it by an increased expenditure. It would be necessary hereafter to propose a supplementary estimate in order to provide for the expenses incurred by keeping up a very considerable irregular force in Canada of militia and volunteers, which it had been found necessary to raise in that country. What the estimate of that augmentation of force was, he could not say, as it had not yet been received. Beyond these additions, he was not at that moment aware that any further increase of the army was likely to be required; but of course he need not tell the right hon. Gentleman that in making that statement he did so with reference only to the present time, and to present circumstances; as it was impossible for any Government or any Secretary at War, to say that it might not be necessary, in the course, perhaps, of a short time, to make a further augmentation. He could only say, that he was not aware of the existence of any circumstance creating such a necessity, and that, should such necessity hereafter arise, it would be to him a matter of great surprise and of deep concern. He believed there was no further explanation necessary respecting the difference in the amount of forces of this and preceding years. As he had already stated, the increase, as compared with last year, was about 5,600, and, as compared with the year before, about 9,400 rank and file. Upon the remaining heads of the estimates, he had very few observations to offer. There were, however, some additions to them which he would shortly mention to the House. The first he had to point out was that of the good-conduct pay. The amount of the estimate taken for it last year was 4,745*l.*, and he was extremely happy to be able to inform the House that since then a considerably greater number of men had established their claim to the advantages held out by it, and that this year's estimate would be the increased sum of 6,396*l.* He thought it right to call the attention of the House to this part of the expenditure, having had occasion to refer to the subject on a former evening. It appeared to him that the working of the warrants which he had had the honour of submitting to his late Majesty as far as it had hitherto been tried, had been extremely satisfactory. The House must be aware that according to the provisions of those warrants, soldiers who enlisted previous to 1833 would not have any advantage in point of pension from the enjoyment of the good conduct pay. Those who enlisted since 1833, under the warrant issued during the administration of the war department by his right hon. Friend the President of the Board of Control, would be allowed under certain regulations either the whole or a large portion of the good-conduct pay in addition to their pensions. Men who enlisted previous to 1833, were obliged, if they accepted the good conduct-pay, to give up their right to the additional 2*d.* a-day at the end of fourteen years; so that soldiers who had enlisted under former warrants had no great inducement to claim the good-conduct pay. It frequently happened that they declined doing so, being unwilling to forfeit their right to the additional pay; but notwithstanding that inducement to decline preferring their claim for the good-conduct pay, he was happy to be able to state, that the number of soldiers who had done so had gone on progressively increasing. The year after the warrant had been established the whole number who preferred their claim was 1,944; last year it was 2,491, and this year it had increased to 3,284. In addition to those soldiers who had claimed the advantages of this warrant, a considerable number had also claimed badges of good conduct, who did not wish to give up their right to the additional pay at the end of the fourteen years, by accepting the good conduct pay. The whole number who had preferred this claim was 11,764. In these, however, a considerable number of soldiers, which I have no means of ascertaining, must have been counted more than once. He could not help saying, that the number of soldiers who had made good their claim to the advantages held out under this warrant was in the highest degree satisfactory; and he trusted that hereafter it would be found to be a very powerful means of assisting commanding officers, in maintaining the discipline of the army without having recourse to means of punishment. There was also an increase in the estimate for beer money of 8,816*l.* With respect to provisions, forage, fuel, and light, there was a considerable increase upon the actual expense incurred—an increase of from 190,000*l.* to 240,000*l.* A portion of that increase, however, was only a transfer from one estimate to another. The House was aware that when cavalry was serving at home, the expense of forage, &c., was paid out of the ordnance estimates; but when serving abroad, out of the army estimates. A considerable number of cavalry having been despatched to Canada, a transfer took place of 11,500*l.* The remainder of the difference between the vote of last year and this arose, from the increased amount of force which it was found necessary to maintain abroad. The regimental contingencies, arising principally from the additional activity used in recruiting, would be increased 5,000*l.* There would also be an increase of 15,000*l.* in the expenses of recruiting, which, however, would be in part met by a diminution of the sum for the purchase of cavalry horses to the amount of 13,100*l.*, leaving the increase, therefore only 1,900*l.* There were also some new charges this year introduced for the first time into the army estimates. One of them was for the sum of 4,500*l.* for warm clothing for the troops in Canada. He conceived that one of the causes which had produced a very considerable and injurious effect upon the soldiers in Canada was that of their having been compelled to purchase certain articles of winter clothing, such as fur caps, gloves, and mocassins; in consequence of which they were placed frequently for a long time under stoppages, and thus many of them became disgusted with the service, and deserted. Regulations had been adopted, by which all soldiers serving in Canada should receive from the commencement of the first winter's service 1*l.* 10*s.* to furnish themselves with those articles; and the further sum of 5*s.* a-year afterwards to keep up their stock. It was found impossible to make arrangements for it in time for the estimates of last year, and he had to inform the House that a considerable sum had in consequence been issued out of the army extraordinaries. It was obvious the expense would be much larger the first year than subsequent years. He believed that a sum of about 18,000*l.* had therefore been issued from the army extraordinaries, and that not more than about 4,500*l.*, which was placed upon the estimates of this year, would be required for keeping up the stock given to the troops. Another new item was the sum of 2,000*l.*, which it was proposed to grant for the purpose of forming libraries in the barracks of this country and the colonies. This was a part of that general policy which had been strongly urged upon the Government in that House, and in the propriety of which he entirely concurred, of endeavouring by all indirect means possible to abate crime, and the consequent necessity of corporal punishment. One of the best ways of preventing crime was by filling up the hours of leisure by some kind of light employment or amusement, and thereby removing the cause of intemperance, to which men were driven when their time hung heavily upon them. He found that for a very considerable period libraries for the soldiers had been established in the territories of the East India Company, and, as he was informed, with the very best effect. In concert, therefore, with the Commander-in-chief, and his right hon. and gallant Friend the Master-general of the Ordnance, arrangements had been made by which libraries would be provided at all the principal stations at home and abroad. They did not propose to take a very large vote in the present year, because there was necessarily some difficulty attending the first introduction of such a system; it would be much better to begin by establishing libraries in particular places; experience would then show how the thing worked, and the system might afterwards be extended or improved, as circumstances might suggest. The proposal at present was, that a room should be set apart in the barrack, to be kept lighted and warmed, and be in charge of the barrack-master, the soldiers being allowed to have the use of the books contained in it. He believed the soldiers who availed themselves of the indulgence would not value it the less for having to make a very trifling and almost nominal payment as a remuneration to the barrack-master for his trouble. Arrangements were already actively in progress, and he hoped in a very short time books would be purchased and despatched to the different stations at which it was proposed the plan should be carried into effect.

Sir *H. Hardinge* inquired whether the selection of the books would be uniform for the different regiments?

Viscount *Howick* said, it was not proposed, that the libraries should be regimental, because that plan would involve considerable expense in removing it along with the regimental baggage. The better plan seemed to be to have fixed libraries in all the principal barracks, where the selection should be varied as much as possible, so that the troops changing in the course of service from one station to another, might take advantage of the variety. He had been in communication with some of the principal booksellers and publishers, who had very handsomely offered to make a considerable reduction in the retail price of the books which might be required for the purpose of establishing these libraries; in the meanwhile a good deal of detailed arrangement was necessary, and he hoped soon to be enabled to say, that the plan was ready to be carried into effect. With a view also, to maintain the discipline of the troops without resorting to flogging, the estimates contained a vote of 10,000*l*. towards improving the means of punishment by imprisonment in particular barrack stations. He hoped, that every barrack station at home and abroad, would shortly possess adequate means of inflicting that punishment without having recourse to the present system of confining soldiers in a gaol along with ordinary offenders for every breach of military discipline. There was an increase in the land force vote of 168,421*l*., together with a net increase on the staff of 2,793*l*. He did not think it necessary to go into any details on the heads of the non-effective estimate; they were stated so fully in the printed papers, that any Gentleman taking an interest in the subject would be fully able to understand them. He would only say, that after deducting the amount of the decrease in the non-effective from the increase of the effective estimate, there was a net increase of 140,852*l*., including, however, the whole force at the Cape for the present year. He should now move, that the sum of 421,383*l*. being the balance of the amount required beyond the sum voted upon account the other evening be granted to her Majesty, for defraying the expenses of the land forces in the United Kingdom, and in the colonies.

The Chairman then put the question, that 421,382*l*. be granted to her Majesty to complete the sum of 3,476,609*l*. for the expenses of the land forces from the 31st of March, 1839, to the 31st of March, 1840.

Sir *H. Hardinge* said he had heard nothing from the noble Lord which could induce him to change the course he had given notice that he should adopt, and if no larger force was to be employed, he must state his reasons to the House for thinking that force inadequate to the emergency in which the country was now placed. The army was now called upon for such services, that if not increased, those services must press with unusual severity on the soldiers, and knowing this, he felt it to be his duty to state it to the House. In entering upon this subject, he found himself compelled to go into details which, however tedious, were almost inseparable from the consideration of the army estimates. The course he should pursue was that of showing what the army now did, and by so doing to lay sufficient grounds for coming to the conclusion that the present force was wholly inadequate for the proper discharge of those duties. The noble Lord stated, that there was an increase in the land force establishment; but, in point of fact, there was no real augmentation. There was nothing more than an anticipation of the numbers requisite to meet the recruiting for the regiments abroad. The Duke of Wellington had laid down the principle, in 1829, that the best mode of saving expense was by suspending the recruiting; and in 1830 it was accordingly suspended, and a considerable reduction made in consequence. In 1831, 1832, and 1833, under Earl Grey's government, the recruiting department was increased to the establishment of 1829, but in 1834 it was again suspended by Lord Melbourne's government. Since that period the diminution had gone on increasing, and the recruiting had been suspended until the diminution of the forces in 1837 amounted to 8,036 men. In November, 1837, when the insurrection broke out in Canada, the army, was, therefore, 8,000 men below even the number of a peace establishment. In 1838 the noble Lord brought in an estimate to augment the army by the number of 2,000 men, owing to the civil war which had broken out in Canada; but so far from this being an addition to the army, even after the present proposed augmentation of 5,700 men, there would be a deficiency of the proper peace establishment. He repeated that the noble Lord now brought forward an estimate proposing an augmentation of 5,500 men; but even that would only bring the army up to the proper number of its peace establishment, and could, therefore, be considered as no augmentation. In his opinion this number was wholly inadequate for the present exigencies of the service, and the pressure would fall chiefly on the troops of the line. There were 103 battalions of infantry, consisting of 740 men each. The foot guards were 4,656 men, inclusive of those in Canada. The number of infantry of the line might be taken at a total of 76,000 men, exclusive of 20,000 in the East Indies. In the West Indies there were 14,800 men, in New South Wales 2,960, in Canada and North America, 13,000, and in the other colonies about 20,000. This would make up about 50,000 men. The number of men belonging to regiments of the line employed abroad, was 50,000; the number of the line at home amounted to 26,000; thus the number of men serving in regiments of the line, exclusive of those in the East Indies, was 76,000, divided into 103 battalions. The regiments at home were composed of twenty-one battalions, each of which contained fifteen companies, and there were fifty-six dépôts. The result was, that there were two men serving abroad to one at home. It would be worth while to know the number of the deficiency that arose from casualties, and besides this, there was 8,000 to be deducted for recruits at home. They might, then, take one-third of the 26,000 for recruits. Allowing, however, for casualties and absences, instead of 26,000 men there would be only 21,000 at quarters, of which only three-fourths could be termed soldiers, as the elder soldiers were constantly being sent abroad. Thus they would have, instead of 26,000, only 17,000 men at home that could be properly termed soldiers. They might, then, say that there were twenty-one complete battalions at home; he believed that one battalion had returned in 1835, and also another in 1836, and they were now called for again for foreign service: at this rate, a regiment after serving twenty years in India might be sent in two years to Gibraltar, the Mediterranean, or the West Indies. This, he was convinced, the committee would agree with him in thinking was a heavy pressure on the soldiers and recruits, and was most severely felt on our establishments. Taking the cavalry in the same way, there were twenty-six regiments, twenty-one of which were at home. Excluding the three regiments of the household cavalry, they had 5,700 cavalry at home, and 3,500 in India. Taking, then, the number of infantry of the line abroad at 56,000 and those at home at 26,000 men, with the number of cavalry he had just stated, as well as the number in India, they had altogether 96,000 men. In Great Britain he could not help feeling that the number of men was too small; and although there had been an increase of 10,000 men in the army estimates, there were not more men at home than there were in 1832 and 1833, during Earl Grey's administration. In addition to this, the noble Viscount, the Secretary for Foreign Affairs, having chosen to take 1,000 marines from their duties at home, and send them to the coast of Spain, the soldiers of the line had also to perform the duties of these men at home. Taking, then, the account as he had just stated it, they would have 21,000 for the number of soldiers of the line at home, 3,000 for the number of Guards, and 5,700 for the number of cavalry, making altogether 29,700; or, taking them at round numbers, at 30,000 as the number of effective men for England and Ireland. If, then, this was to be taken as the number of soldiers, there would be 10,000 men at home less than there was at the commencement of 1794. Allusion had repeatedly been made to the state of excitement that prevailed in several parts of the country, and her Majesty in her gracious Speech from the Throne, had denounced the persevering efforts that had been made in some parts of the country, to excite in the minds of her subjects feelings of disobedience and resistance to the laws, and to recommend dangerous and illegal practices; in addition to this, the noble Viscount, the Prime Minister, thought himself called upon in the other House to say that the manner in which the meetings were carried on in some of the manufacturing districts by torchlight, and in the night, was most formidable and alarming, and was most favourable to those inclined to distract the public peace, and that it was necessary that great care and watchfulness should be exercised with regard to them, and this had been confirmed in that House by the noble Lord the Secretary for the Home Department. Was it, then, a proceeding that could be justified on the part of the Government to come down to that House, when the country was admitted to be in a state of great excitement, and that there were persons endeavouring to disturb the public peace, and ask for a force of 10,000 men less than they had in 1794? He would not dwell upon the proposition recommending warm clothing for the soldiers serving in Canada, further than to say that he was extremely glad, that it had been made, and he was well satisfied that it would prove a great consideration to the soldiers having to serve in inclement climates. The noble Lord was well aware that for many years he (Sir Henry Hardinge) had not opposed the army estimates, whether proposed by the noble Lord or by any other Secretary at War. But looking, then, at the change that had taken place both as regarded our colonies and also the events that affected our foreign relations since the administration of Earl Grey in 1833 and 1834, and in allusion to the circumstances that he had just alluded to at home, he thought that he was bound in stating that a much stronger force was required than they now had: that was, that the estimates brought forward by the noble Lord were inadequate. Independently of everything that had occurred at home he felt that the circumstances that had recently happened abroad, and which were so deeply interesting to the nation, rendered it necessary that they should have a larger number of men. He should not object to the proposal of establishing libraries made by the noble Lord, nor to the other minor improvements made by him; but he thought that the present estimate, which was merely the peace establishment which Earl Grey had maintained in 1833 and 1834, was a force quite inadequate to the services to be performed. There were circumstances of a very critical nature passing abroad, which rendered it necessary that this country should be fully prepared. He would call the attention of the Committee to a consideration of the state of affairs in India. That required Parliament, as he conceived, to make an immediate addition to the number of our forces in that part of our empire. He had been told that that matter was of no importance to the House of Commons, as the East India Company paid the expense of any regular troops which we sent there. Allowing that to be the case, it was still a matter of importance to the army, as the additional regiments which we sent out there were sent out at the expense of the other regiments which had left here on service, and to any regiment which was kept in India beyond its regular time it was little satisfaction to be told, that the East India Company would defray the expense of its being kept there. On the other hand, if the regiments now in India and in Ceylon were brought home on the completion of their regular period of service, that would occasion an additional pressure on the troops which remained there. He would not enter on the present occasion into a consideration of the political state of India. It was one, however, which was the subject of deep anxiety to every man who reflected upon it. Neither would he enter into a consideration of the treaty which the Governor-general had made with Runjeet Singh, as his right hon. Friend the Member for Pembroke had already given notice of a motion upon it. He would not say whether it were wise or prudent in Lord Auckland to promulgate the terms of that treaty throughout the whole of India. He would merely allude to that part of it in which the British army in India was concerned, and he found from that document that the British army was on its march from the Indus to Cabul, a distance of 600 miles, to put Schah Soojah on the throne of Cabul, and to remain there until he was firmly fixed on his throne, and until the independence of Afghanistan was established. That would be an operation of great difficulty; but whoever went there—and he was glad to find that Sir John Keene had the command of the expedition—he was certain that everything would be done which courage on the part of the men and talent and experience on the part of their commander could possibly effect. He should be sorry to say a word that could discourage those who had the charge of that operation; but, as its fate would be decided before the reports of their debate could reach India, he thought that he might be permitted to say even now that the operation was a delicate one. Having to march so far from their lines of communication, and to make arrangements along their line of march for their supplies of provisions and for their means of transport, the army would undoubtedly have a difficult operation before it. But before he stated his opinion on the state of India, he would address a few words to the Committee to show that our army there was not in that state of preparation in which it ought to be. The right hon. Gentleman opposite on a former occasion had said that he would avail himself of the opportunity to correct a statement which had been made elsewhere respecting the deficiency of troops in the East Indies, and respecting our carrying on a war there upon a reduced peace establishment. He (Sir H. Hardinge) would not say whether the force now in India was sufficient or not for the emergency in which our empire there was now placed; but this he would say, that it was less now than it had ever been on any previous occasion. If he could show, that the state of India now was more critical than it had been during the last Burmese war in 1825, he imagined that he should satisfy the committee that the statement made elsewhere was not so incorrect as the right hon. Gentleman had asserted. The right hon. Gentleman had also stated that 3,000 additional men were to be sent to India,—namely a regiment from the Mauritius, and another from Ceylon. Now, the right hon. Gentleman might be able to get a regiment from the Mauritius, although 6,000 slaves were about to be emancipated there, and he might also be able to get two battalions from Ceylon; but he (Sir H. Hardinge) thought that even then he should be able to show that our force in India was lesst han it had been on any previous occasion, while the difficulties of India were infinitely greater. Let them look at the state of the army which was under orders for Candahar. There were two corps which were to march upon that country. It happened however that these troops had not moved during the months of December and January, in consequence of a want of provisions, and of the means of transport. He would not enter into the political question, whether we had any right to go among the Ameers of Sinde, and to invade their territories in order to proceed against Afghanistan, but he thought that he had shown decisively that our military enterprise in that quarter would be one of very great difficulty. The right hon. Gentleman had also said, that he should move an armament to the Nepaulese rontier, in consequence of the military activity of that people. He (Sir H. Hardinge) would only remind the Committee, that the last time our army was in Nepaul we were under the necessity of collecting a force of 30,000 men, besides the reserves. That army operated in three divisions; and only one of them was successful, namely, that under Sir David Ochterlony. Nepaul had a frontier of 600 miles: and if it were true that there was a hostile feeling against us throughout the whole of that part of India, it might be well for us that we had our own territories to fall back upon. With the King of Ava, who had refused even to see our envoy, Colonel Benson, we had been for some time on such terms, that if we were not absolutely at war at present with the Burmese, all the preparations for war were ready. He would not say that it would be necessary for us to operate, as we had done before, on the river Irraquoddy: but he recollected that the last time we had done so 30,000 men were employed, and such a loss of life took place during the operations, from the insalubrity of the climate, that he believed Sir A. Campbell had never been able to set more than 5,000 men in line at any one period. Rajah-Pootana was then quiet. Burtpore had been captured by assault, and it was merely on our eastern frontier that we had anything to fear from an attack on the Burmese. He contended, then, that as we had jealousy within and hostility without our territories in India, and as a feeling of discontent had been generated among the native population of Bengal in consequence of our late proceedings respecting the resumption of lands, he had made out a case for looking at the state of our military preparations in India. Now, what was that state of preparation? He would take the amount of our force during the last war in which we were engaged in India—the Burmese war of 1825 and 1826—and would compare it with our force in 1837, which, after Lord W. Bentinck had made his military reforms, was to be our paramount peace establishment. The numbers were taken from certain tables published by the East India Company, and he would add to our force in 1837, 24,000 men, which had since been added to the Indian army. In the year 1826 our army in India consisted of an European force of 30,782 men, and of a native force of 260,273 men, making an aggregate of 291,055 men. In the year 1837 it consisted of an European force of 30,340 men, and of a native force of 150,000 men, making an aggregate of

180,340 men. There was a difference, then of more than 110,000 men between the number of troops we had in India in 1826 and in 1827. He ought to add, that in the latter year all those troops which might be considered as supplementary troops, might be taken at 16,000 men. He must repeat, however, that the result to which he had come from his calculations, was, that we had 110,000 men less in India in 1837 than we had in 1826. Now, giving the right hon. Gentleman credit for the augmentation of 24,000 men, which he had made to our Indian army, he found that there was at present a diminution in our forces of 86,000 men as compared with the year 1826, and giving him further credit for the 16,000 supplementary provincial troops, there was a diminution of at least 70,000 men. He found this position of his corroborated by the evidence given by Colonel Salmond, the military secretary of the Bengal Government, before a Committee of the House of Commons in 1832, in which he admitted that there had been a reduction of 71,000 in the army of the Presidency of Bengal in the interval between the years 1826 and 1832. He had thought it right to call the notice of the Committee to this point; but the right hon. Gentleman, no doubt, had information which would satisfy the House that the state of India did not require 70,000 men in arms more than what we had at the present moment. There was another point connected with this part of the subject, on which he wished to say a few words. He found that in 1827 there were in India 26,000 King's troops; by the present estimate he saw that there were now only 20,000 King's troops there. From what the noble Lord had said respecting his plan of anticipating casualties—a plan of which he (Sir H. Hardinge did not disapprove, as he thought it wise to be prepared with the means of filling up casualties as soon as they took place)—he would suppose that, instead of the 20,000 King's troops mentioned in the estimate, he had 21,000 of them in India. The noble Lord had said that he had an addition of 3,000 troops to send to India [Lord *Howick*, "*No!*"]—well, then supposing that the noble Lord had 21,000 King's troops in India, which was 1,000 more than his estimate, he (Sir H. Hardinge had made out that we had at the present moment, under all the circumstances of emergency in which India was involved, 5,000 less King's troops in that country than we had in 1827. If then, under such circumstances, they had such a diminution in their military establishments in India, it was a matter well worthy the consideration of the House and the Government, and he felt that he should not have done his duty to the country if he had not brought it thus prominently forward. He would say nothing at present of our occupation of the island of Karak, or of our attack upon Aden, or of the manifesto of Lord Auckland. He would not enter at present into the consideration of the question whether that manifesto did or did not contain Lord Auckland's real and genuine sentiments. He would not even allude to the hostile designs of Russia and Persia. He would only say, that we were engaged in offensive operations in India both on the side of Arracan and on the side of Persia, and would leave the Committee to judge whether our present amount of force was adequate to such undertakings. Having thus disposed of the state of India, he would now proceed to the consideration of the state of Canada. The noble Lord had informed the Committee, that it was impossible for him to give any estimate of the expense of the irregular forces now in arms in Canada for the ensuing year. But the noble Lord must be aware of the expense which was incurred on their account during the last year, and which amounted, it was said, to half a million. He thought that the noble Lord ought to furnish the Committee with an account of the expenditure of last year, in order that it might be able to form some judgment as to the expenditure of the present year. He was well aware of the difficulty that there was in forming an estimate of expenses not yet incurred; but he hoped, that the noble Lord would inform the Committee what number of militia was kept up and paid by the Government in Canada at the present time. The Earl of Durham had stated in his report on Canada, that the expense of these irregular forces was one third more than the expense of the same number of regular troops would be. Now, if the Earl of Durham, the late Governor-general of Canada, were of that opinion; it became the duty of her Majesty's Government to lose no time in entering into an examination upon that point: for if the expense of the irregular forces was to that of the regular forces as three to one, it became a question whether we ought not to increase our army to that amount, rather than occupy the farmers of Canada in military service, to the great detriment of the agriculture of that province. He entirely agreed with that part of her Majesty's Speech in which she declared her firm determination to maintain the authority of her Crown in Canada. He was one who was prepared not only to maintain the authority of the Crown in that country, but also to show to our British fellow-subjects there that we had a high opinion of their loyalty and attachment to this country, and that we should do all in our power to rescue them from the dreadful state of suffering in which they were now involved. Whatever might be the difference of our opinions as to the causes of the late insurrection, and as to the conduct or misconduct of this or that Administration towards Canada, no man could deny, that our unfortunate fellow-subjects there were entitled to our assistance in the most effective way in which it could be given. Besides, it was not only good feeling, but good policy also, that required us to do this, for there was something in showing the sympathizers and the land pirates of the frontier states of America, that we were determined at all hazards to maintain the sovereignty of the Queen and the security of her subjects. The sooner we placed Canada in a state of security, the more honourable would it be to the Crown, and the more conducive to the prosperity of our fellow-subjects there. He should conceive, that by this time the Government ought to have placed Sir John Colborne in a state of security against all attack, and though he was sure that that gallant officer would do all that man could do for the defence and preservation of that colony, he was afraid that the number of troops at present there was not more than sufficient, if indeed they were sufficient, for that purpose. When he looked at the state of the colony of New Brunswick, he saw that there, beyond all question, we were not in that state of preparation in which we ought to be. He would ask any Member of her Majesty's Government—he would ask the Under Secretary for the Colonies, what was the state of our military force in New Brunswick when Sir John Harvey, a man whom he loved as a private friend, and respected as a gallant and experienced officer, felt it his duty to inform the Government of Maine, that he had received the commands of her Majesty to repel aggression by force, and that he must carry his orders into effect, if he (the governor of Maine) did not immediately withdraw his troops from the disputed territory? There could not, he conceived, be any doubt that Sir John Harvey never would have stated, that he had received the commands of her Majesty to repel by force any incursions from Maine unless he had received instructions to that effect. If he had received such instructions, let the Committee consider what was the state of military preparation in the province of Maine. That province was as large as half Ireland. Its militia consisted of 42,000 men. Its legislature had granted 800,000 dollars, which was somewhere about 170,000*l.* sterling, to equip 10,000 militia, to take and defend the disputed territory. When under these circumstances the Government ordered that gallant officer, Sir John Harvey, to repel force by force, one would suppose, that it had provided him with an amount of force sufficient to carry her Majesty's commands into full effect. What, then, was the peace establishment of the two colonies of Nova Scotia and New Brunswick? Those two provinces—for there was no military communication between Halifax and Quebec, which were 600 miles apart—were completely isolated from the Canadas, and depended on nothing but their communication with the West Indies, or with the mother country by sea. Having stated the situation of the two provinces of Nova Scotia and New Brunswick, and also the military force of the province of Maine, he would ask the Committee what they thought was the probable amount of force under Sir John Harvey's command. That gallant officer had four battalions as a peace establishment for Nova Scotia and New Brunswick. Under these circumstances, every one would suppose, that Government before it issued these orders to Sir John Harvey had placed under his command eight, ten, or twelve battalions. Now the fact was, that when Sir John Harvey made that threat to the governor of Maine, he had only one weak battalion under his command in Nova Scotia. He believed that, at the moment when this letter was written, Sir J. Harvey had not 350 bayonets at his command. Sir Colin Campbell, at Halifax, had only four companies, and Sir John Harvey not more than six weak companies, with some thousand militia. He must say that, under these circumstances, it was a very great dereliction of duty in Government to leave this gallant officer in a state so degrading, for thus he must term it, as to be incapable of giving effect to the declaration he had made. Sir John Harvey, writing to Governor Fairfield, in February last, asserts, that he must either fail in his duty by "abstaining from the fulfilment of the command of his Sovereign, or, by acting up to those commands, place the two countries in a state of border collision, if not the two nations in a state of immediate and active hostility." Did this passage not prove, that the governor had received those orders? If he had received those orders, it was the bounden duty of Government to have given him the means of carrying them into effect, and not to have left him in the degrading position of one who had made a threat which he was unable to carry into execution. Mr. Fox, the British Minister Extraordinary at Washington, had since issued a memorandum, in which he cancelled the orders of her Majesty, and said to General Harvey, "although you have told the Governor of Maine that you will move in obedience to the commands of her Majesty, and repel force by force, the Minister at Washington tells you, that you shall do no such thing, and, therefore, you must not move." He knew nothing more childish or degrading in the conduct of Government than to give orders of a warlike description, which in reality, the Minister at Washington was afterwards obliged to cancel. For his own part, he quite approved of Mr Fox's conduct; he thought it was in the highest degree, prudent and wise — he thought, that Minister had no alternative, for there was nothing he (Sir H. Hardinge) should more deprecate than a war between Great Britain and America. Notwithstanding the provocation which was given by the hostile speeches made in the Senate of the United States, he should be sorry if anything escaped any hon. Member of this House which could have the effect of irritating the public mind on this subject. He understood we were to have an accession of force in each of the two provinces of North America, and from what quarter did the House suppose it was to come? Two battalions, in the depth of a north American winter, were to come from the West Indies to those provinces. One had come from Barbadoes, and had actually arrived at its destination, after Sir J. Harvey had written the letter to which he had referred. After such a change of climate it was impossible that the battalion could undertake the duties of soldiers at this season of the year. He was sure any hon. Mem- who had served in Canada, and he saw a noble Lord opposite who had just returned from that country, must know, that no man just come from the West-Indies, was capable of standing sentry at night in Canada. He had in his possession some facts, which he did not choose to mention to the House, proving most strongly, and more than strongly, very unpleasantly, the effects of climate on these men. If this was to be the mode in which the relief of the forces now serving in Canada was to be accomplished, it might be as well to look at the state of the West-Indies themselves. One battalion was removed from Barbadoes, another from Jamaica. It had been the custom, when he (Sir H. Hardinge) was in office, to keep one of these islands as a reserved station, whence, in case of need, a reinforcement might be sent to any garrison which stood in need of it. Therefore, he should not have the smallest objection, in any ordinary circumstances, to the removal of regiments from the West-Indies to North America. At the proper season of the year it might be a very advisable plan; but the objection he entertained was, to removing them at this season of the year in consequence of the emergencies of the public service. To expect them to do the duty of soldiers under such circumstances, was perfectly futile; it was impossible the men could be equal to it. When the letter to which he had referred was written, the battalion coming from Jamaica appeared to be expected. He rather thought, that instead of being able to spare a battalion for New Brunswick, Jamaica was just now in a condition to need an additional battalion very much itself. The Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies had given notice on the part of Government, of a bill to suspend the Assembly of Jamaica, and he had read a letter written by the Marquess of Sligo, ex-governor of that Colony, in which that noble Lord stated most distinctly, that the Government and the Legislature being at variance, it was absolutely impossible they could go on; that the police would not execute the order of the magistrates, and that no law at present existed in Jamaica. This was the state of things in which Government ventured to remove from Jamaica a battalion which could not possibly perform efficient service in Canada. He understood, that the Jamaica battalion had been ready to embark for a considerable time, and why could it not sail? Did the House wish to hear why it had not been able to move? The reason why it had not been able to sail was, that the whole of her Majesty's squadron belonging to the North American station, the whole of the squadron usually divided between Halifax, Bermuda, and the West-Indies, with the exception of one or two small vessels, had gone to Vera Cruz, so that in fact there was not a single ship of war able to convey the battalion from Jamaica. When the battalion got to its destination it would be inefficient; a single invalid battalion was to assist another battalion in repelling the aggression of the whole force of the northern states of America. He must say, that it was a most wretched, a most miserable business, involving too, the character of her Majesty, to issue in her name commands to her officers, which the Government at home would not afford them the means of executing. This was a step which, in his opinion, would attach discredit to her Majesty's councils. Such were some of the reasons why it appeared to him, that her Majesty's forces should be increased. He might go to other stations Bermuda for instance. All who were conversant with the interests of our West-Indian and North American possessions must know that Bermuda was one of our most important posts—a station where the navy could be refitted with the greatest ease, where during the last war we had about 2,000,000*l.* value in stores, where our ships (such was the safety of the anchorage) could at all times take refuge. This island had been fortified at very great expense; for some years 5,000 convicts had been engaged on the works, and it was most important in every point of view that this island should be maintained in a state of perfect security. For a long time even after the determination of the sympathisers in the United States to attack us had been known, the force at Bermuda was never greater than a small battalion of 480 or 500 men, perfectly inadequate to do the duties of the station. Considering that this post was one of great consequence, that immense sums had been expended upon it, and that the efficiency of the navy in those seas was chiefly to be secured by means of it, it was indispensable, that it should be in safe keeping. To what quarter were they to look for further reinforcements, should they be needed, to increase our army in America, in the event of the dispute between New Brunswick and Maine becoming more serious? Not to the West Indies, from which two battalions had already been withdrawn. Not to the Canadas, for communication between these provinces and New Brunswick was impracticable, separated as they were by a wilderness of 400 or 500 miles. In the other colonies every man was required. From the Ionian islands not one could be spared, from Malta not one. From Gibraltar, perhaps, one battalion more could be squeezed, if they could bring themselves to inflict great additional hardship on the troops now in garrison there. It really appeared to him absolutely necessary, that Government should look to the state of the army—should fairly consider the amount of work done by it, and apply themselves to the question, whether it was their duty to increase the military force. He had now shown, that of the infantry 50,000 were abroad, and only 26,000 at home, and that they underwent in consequence the most severe hardship. They were three years at home, and ten abroad. In ordinary circumstances they endured great privations, and when an emergency arose, the number must be increased to maintain the efficiency of the force unimpaired. If the pressure were only temporary, he should say, as a military man, let the increased labour fall upon the army rather than any permanent augmentation of the force should occur; but if it were not temporary, then he said, it was the duty of Government to be prepared for the increased difficulties that must result from any emergency, and he contended they were not prepared. He had shown the condition of our weak force in New Brunswick at the time when collision with Maine was about to occur. He had shown the inefficient state of the garrison at Bermuda, which they ought to keep under sure lock and key. He had referred to the present condition of the West Indies, which loudly demanded, that the force there stationed should not be diminished. He had established his assertion of the extreme danger resulting from the circumstances of an army in India, and he thought he had said enough to show, that it was incumbent on Government to turn their attention to the subject, and that the statement of his noble Friend regarding the deficiency of troops was not a mere haphazard assertion. He could assure the House, that he looked on the amount of force proposed in the present estimates to be inadequate, because he knew what soldiers had to encounter abroad. In ancient or modern history there was no instance of any army having done so much service as the British. The noble Lord and right hon. Gentleman opposite ought to reflect, that that army had conquered for this country, and now kept possession of, one-tenth part of the globe, and 150,000,000 of subjects, and they ought not to place it in a position that must overwhelm it with risks and difficulties, which it ought never in justice to be required to encounter.

Viscount *Howick* said, the right hon. Gentleman had made a statement, which no doubt, deserved very serious attention and consideration. In endeavouring to meet that statement, he would first address himself to the particular points touched upon by the right hon. Gentleman, and then say a word upon the general principle involved in his remarks. The right hon. Gentleman had adverted to the pressure of the colonial service upon the infantry of the army. He had stated, most truly, that the important point to be considered was, the pressure upon the infantry of the line, since the pressure of the cavalry and guards could not be considered in any respect excessive. He (Lord Howick) agreed with the right hon. Gentleman, and he had himself stated to the House in former years, that the pressure of service on the infantry of the line was extremely severe; but he begged to observe, that the pressure at the present time, as shown by the proportions of troops stationed at home and abroad, was not greater than it had been at former periods. He would call the attention of the House to a statement of the proportion of infantry stationed at home and abroad in different years, which, anticipating this discussion, he had taken care to procure, and he could select those years which gave the clearest view of the average state. In 1820 there were, on the whole establishment of the army at home, 26,650 rank and file; abroad, including India 41,770; showing the proportion to be sixty-one per cent. abroad, and thirty-nine at home. In 1823 the proportion was sixty-three per cent abroad. He took the amount of strength up to which the regiments were severally allowed to recruit——

Mr. *Hume* here interrupted the noble Lord to remark, that the estimates of 1823 was 72,000 men, while that of the present year was 89,000.

Viscount *Howick* said, his statement related exclusively to the infantry; and he was taking the actual number of men ordered to be kept up by the Government. In 1823, the number of men in India and the colonies was 38,700, at home 23,000, showing the proportion to be sixty-three per cent. abroad, and twenty-seven at home: In 1830, there were 41,440 in India, and the colonies, and 28,140 in this country; giving a proportion of sixty per cent. abroad and forty at home. In the present year the number abroad, including India was to be 47,000, at home, and coming home 29,137. The right hon. Gentleman he perceived objected to his including among the troops at home the regiments on their passage from foreign stations; but, at all events, for the purpose of the comparison he was now instituting, there could be no objection to the principle on which the statement was made, since it was the same for the present as for other years. In 1830, when the right hon. Gentleman was Secretary at War, and in the present year, the proportions of infantry of the line stationed at home and abroad were precisely the same. In each year the proportion abroad was sixty, that at home forty per cent. He thought this statement would show, that there was no such very greatly increased pressure of service on the infantry of the line as the right hon. Gentleman would lead the House to imagine. It was but fair to admit, however, that this statement must be received with some allowance, for it was perfectly true that although the per centage of the force at home and abroad, had not varied to the disadvantage of the army, the number of years for which the service of battalions abroad continued had been augmented. This effect had resulted from the establishment of the dépôt system, which had been only five years in operation in 1830. With a similar proportion of force abroad, no regiment had been so long abroad in 1830 as at present, and the regiments next for foreign service in that year had been a longer time at home than was now the case. The right hon. Gentleman, who was an advocate of the dépôt system, would recollect, that it had been adopted for the purpose of diminishing the pressure, allowing the interchange between men in regiments and in dépôt companies. How far it had answered that purpose, it was not now his business to inquire, but he knew, that the proportion of infantry of the line abroad was not greater now, even with the exigencies of Canadian affairs, than it had been when the right hon. Gentleman was Secretary at War; and if it were true that the proportion of years spent abroad by the regiments had been increased, against that was to be set the relief, which it was the object of the dépôt system to afford to the men of these regiments. Certainly if the dépôt system had not afforded additional relief to the soldiers of the various regiments in proportion to the increased period spent abroad, it must be allowed not to have succeeded; but, as long as the whole proportion of the force stationed abroad had not been increased, he did not think they had a right to assume that the pressure caused by colonial service had been augmented. The right hon. Gentleman had said, that though it was possible to augment the force stationed in India without any increase of expense, that was by no means a matter of indifference to the infantry of the army, because it would increase the period of foreign service to the regiments employed. [Sir *H. Hardinge:* If the regiments were coming home.] Undoubtedly, that would be the case, but the right hon. Gentleman would see, that it would be practicable to increase the present force of the line above 5,000 men, without making each regiment stronger than it was at one period in India. Therefore, he trusted there would be no demand for an additional force that might not be met by adding to the number of men in each regiment without increasing the number of regiments now in India. As to the distribution of the forces in India, that was a point on which the right hon. Gentleman, the President of the Board of Control, would be much more able to give information than he (Lord Howick) was. The right hon. Gentleman had argued, that the force in Canada was very inefficient, and that Government was liable to very great blame on account of its present state. He believed the right hon. Gentleman had quoted a passage from Lord Durham's report relative to the increased expense of militia as compared with regular troops, and had said, if the passage was borne out by facts, this proved extremely bad management on the part of Government in not having a larger regular force in Canada. He begged to inform the right hon. Gentleman that the whole number of regular troops, in British America and on the point of arriving there, at the close of last year, amounted to 13,000, rank and file. That, he was sure, the House would admit, was a very considerable army indeed, and this was in addition to the irregular troops. That force had been thought so amply sufficient for the exigencies of the Canadian service, that orders had been issued by Lord Durham, in concurrence with Sir J. Colburne and Sir G. Arthur for disbanding almost the whole of the militia and volunteers. And those proportions of this particular force which were maintained, were maintained for a particular service, which it was thought by Sir John Colborne, they were better adapted for than the troops of the line. The service was one that required numbers of small detachments scattered over a frontier, whose extent the right hon. Officer had himself stated at 1,500 miles, and it was a service which the hon. Gentleman well knew was found to be exceedingly detrimental to the discipline of regiments of the line; and which, in a country presenting such extraordinary temptations for deserting as British North America, would be a peculiarly objectionable mode of employing the regular troops. It would have been necessary, too, to have sent these troops from England at a great expense, and a very considerable loss of time. This necessity it had been deemed possible to remove, if they called into active service a very large force of militia and volunteers. He asked, could any other method, equally effective have been devised to meet the emergency? The right hon. Gentleman said, that we had 1,500 miles of frontier in the Canadas to defend. Well, what was the amount of force which Sir George Arthur and Sir John Colborne had thought necessary for the defence of the frontier? No less a body than 38,000 men, which was the force raised, and which consisted of militia and volunteers. He begged the House to bear this in mind; and he was glad to be able to assure them that he found both from public documents, and from private accounts, that this large body had been rendered highly efficient and well disciplined, and that the men in it were animated by a very great degree of spirit and determination to defend their country against any attacks which might be made upon it. He might add, that he had communicated with more than one officer who had seen them, that many of them might have appeared side by side with the regiments of the line, without any disgrace. Now, he need hardly observe, that to raise a force of that amount in this country would have been attended with an enormous expense, and, therefore, that although the expense of these militia and volunteers, which actually on service might be somewhat greater than would have been the expense of the same number of regulars on service.

Sir *H. Hardinge:* Three to one greater, according to Lord Durham.

Viscount *Howick* said, that if not a mistake or misquotation, it was at all events a very inaccurate statement on the part of the Earl of Durham. He was persuaded that it was far from being the fact. During the time of actual service, the Canadian militia were assuredly more expensive than regular troops of the same amount would be; but then it must be remembered, that the mere expense of transporting an equal number of troops across the Atlantic would be very large, and that when their service should have ceased to be necessary, they could not be put down and laid aside with the same ease, or at so small an expense as the colonial militia. He did not know whether it had been made public, but he knew from private intelligence that Sir John Colborne, in consequence of the comparatively tranquil aspect of affairs at present, had been enabled to put a part of these troops, he (Viscount Howick) believed it was Montreal, on what was there called a "sedentary footing;" that was to say, the men were only called out for drill on a single day in the week, and were only paid for that one day. It ought to be observed, therefore, that though the country was at a greater expense for the maintenance of these men while on actual service, than if the same number of troops of the line had been employed, yet that they saved the expense of raising these corps here, the expense of sending them across the Atlantic, and the expense of reducing and disbanding them. But this was not all; for, in addition, we had the advantage of having at this moment these troops ready to be called out, and in a condition to give efficient support to any operations which might be adopted for repelling hostile attacks. He now came to what the right hon. Gentleman had advanced with respect to the situation of affairs in New Brunswick. The right hon. Officer had stated, that the force at present on foot in that colony was quite inadequate for the security of the inhabitants at the present juncture; and he had given the House a description of the force of the State of Maine, and of the numbers of men who might be made available in case of hostilities. But he begged to point out, that this whole force consisted of militia, while the right hon. Officer, on the other hand, in stating the amount of force we had ready in New Brunswick, in case we were called upon to repel an hostile attack on that province, wholly omitted to take into account the New Brunswick militia. That militia, however, ought by no means to be left out of the enumeration of troops available, in case of the occurrence of a necessity for hostile operations in New Brunswick. But, more than this, it must not be considered that this body of men ought to be left out of the enumeration of forces available for military purposes in the Canadas, because Sir John Colborne, on whose judgment, he believed, the right hon Officer opposite was disposed to rely, had had opportunities which he had no doubt used, of calculating what would be the amount of troops necessary for the security of the Canadas, and he had included these militia in his computation.

Sir *H. Hardinge*: Four hundred miles of wilderness intervenes between New Brunswick and Canada.

Viscount *Howick* knew that troops could not be sent from one to the other very easily; but he did say, that as Sir John Colborne had had opportunities of making his calculations for the purposes he had mentioned, he must, before he concentrated on Canada so large a portion of the disposable forces there on foot, have been aware what provision it was necessary to make, with a view to the security of New Brunswick. But he would say, that both with respect to what had fallen from the right hon. Officer in regard to New Brunswick and Nova Scotia, he felt great difficulty in answering fully the statements of the right hon. Officer, arising from the circumstance that he did not think it would be prudent, with regard to the public service, to tell the House what were the amount of forces at Halifax and in New Brunswick, at that moment. The right hon. Officer had been pleased to be extraordinarily severe on the arrival of certain regiments in Canada, in what he called the depth of winter, and he stated, that it was impossible, after arriving from the West Indies, any troops could be fit for service in such a climate as that of Canada at that season of the year. The right hon. Gentleman particularly referred to the arrival of the 36th regiment. But this regiment, in fact, did not arrive in Canada in the depth of their winter, because the vessel which transported them from the West Indies got back in the month of December; nor did they as the right hon. Gentleman stated, go to meet a sudden emergency, but they went at the usual time in the usual course of relief. With respect to the 9th regiment that certainly did arrive at Halifax in the winter, in consequence of new disturbances having arisen in Canada. But so far from the men being in the condition described by the right hon. Gentleman, the Lieutenant-governor of Nova Scotia, Sir Colin Campbell, reported that the whole four companies which had arrived were "in exceedingly good order"—that was the expression used. It appeared, therefore, that this regiment was in excellent order, instead of having arrived in a miserable state, as was asserted by the right hon. Officer.

Sir *H. Hardinge*: I beg pardon; I said that the climate made the service miserable to men just arrived from the West Indies.

Viscount *Howick* thought there was a great and marked difference between the report of the Lieutenant-governor Sir Colin Campbell, that the men were in excellent order and the impressions which the remarks and statements of the right hon. Gentleman on the subject were calculated to convey. But this was not all; drafts of men to that regiment had gone out from this country some time ago. But the right hon. Gentleman asked, how could we take men from the West India Islands? And he had asserted, that the troops in the West Indies required increase rather than diminution. Now, this he was confident the right hon. Officer would not have asked, had he taken the trouble of reading the papers on the Table of the House, in explanation of the present state of Jamaica. Had the right hon. Gentleman taken this step, he would have seen, that though, owing to the conduct of the House of Assembly, the people of Jamaica were in extreme want of legislative proceedings, for the sake of supplying the laws which became necessary on the late change in the relations of the negro population; yet, as to anything like violence or insubordination, on the part of that population, the island never was, at any period of history, in a state of more complete security than at the present moment. This he was firmly convinced of; and he would take that opportunity of remarking with reference to the present state of the West India Islands in general, that Parliament was beginning to reap, in the complete tranquillity of those colonies, the benefit of the measure which they had passed six years ago, for putting an end to negro slavery. But on this part of the subject there was another point, as his hon. Friend reminded him, which well deserved the consideration of the House; and that was, that we were now, in reducing our military establishments in the West Indies, only going back to the rate of establishment which existed in those colonies previous to the passing of the Emancipation Act, and which had been increased in consequence of the agitation of society there, and in order to be provided against any evil results which might possibly arise from the first operation of that measure. The good effects of the emancipation, if they had not quite fulfilled the expectations of the authors of the measure, at any rate in this were conspicuous, that the West India colonies never were more free from violence or insubordination on the part of the negro population than at the present moment. The right hon. Gentleman had next gone to Bermuda, where he accused the Government of keeping an insufficient garrison, and said, that it ought to be put in a state of defence. Now, in answer to this charge, he might state his belief, that for a long time we had kept but one battalion there—this he might remark by way of answer to the right hon. Gentleman, but he thought the right hon. Gentleman had sufficiently answered himself when he stated, that Bermuda was a great naval station. Undoubtedly, Bermuda was a great and important naval station, and therefore, it was the less necessary, that it should be defended by battalions of troops ; we might safely trust, for its security from hostile attacks, to the influence of our naval superiority. But here a very serious question arose out of the remarks of the right hon. Gentleman. Were we to assume, that we were so near a quarrel with the United States of North America, as to think it necessary, at once to put our establishments in their vicinity, upon a war footing? If that was the opinion of the right hon. Officer, he could only say, that opinion was very different from that which he entertained; and he believed, that if any one thing more than another could tend directly to that result, it would be to show the Americans, that we felt a jealousy of them, and that we took these steps of increasing our establishments without adequate cause. He believed that war would prove the greatest calamity to both countries that could possibly befal them, and therefore that we were bound to avoid by every means in our power every thing which could by possibility lead to hostilities. With respect to the state of Maine, the right hon. Gentleman must remember, that if the existing dispute continued, it must be with the general government of the United States; because the federal government must be responsible for the constituent States. If a war became necessary, we must therefore make corresponding efforts; and whenever that emergency might arrive, he believed this country would not be wanting to itself in the preparations of vigorous measures; but he thought it would be a highly impolitic and dangerous course, if we were to act as if that emergency had already occurred. After all, if the right hon. Gentleman and his party thought, that the policy of her Majesty's Government exposed the interests of the country to danger, and that due measures were not taken for adequate defence, surely if they thought this, it was their duty, as a great party, not to confine themselves to bringing forward a few remarks on the army estimates, but to take means for obtaining the opinion of the House of Commons as to the real character of the policy of Government; and if the House should agree with the right hon. Gentleman and his friends as to the proper line of policy which should be pursued, then it would be of course, that they should succeed to the executive Government, and that they should propose increased estimates to Parliament for the purpose of supporting the line of policy they advocated. But he, for one, did object to an increase of the estimates to the rate of war charges, and he was the more desirous to state this distinctly, because, during the whole of the four years he had been in Parliament, previous to the change in 1830, he was one of those few Members on that side of the House who never gave a vote in favour of reduction either of the military or the naval estimates. Though he differed with the then Government he was so unwilling to embarrass them on this head, that he did not recollect ever to have given a vote with the object of diminishing the military or naval establishments of the country. He had never supported the motions which his hon. Friend the Member for Kilkenny was accustomed to make on those occasions. The only vote he had ever given for diminishing one of these estimates was, upon a motion intended as a test of opinion upon the policy pursued by the Government with regard to Canada, and it was distinctly understood was not meant to lead to a reduction of the force. He, however, thought, that in order to meet the dangers and difficulties of war, the right principle for this country was to husband its resources during peace. The House must know and feel, that if there was to be an increase of our establishments beyond their present extent, there would not only be no reduction of taxation, but it would be necessary to impose new taxes. Now he believed, that they were in a better situation to meet a war from having during the last few years made considerable reductions of taxation, and from having got rid in particular of several taxes which pressed on manufactures and industry, that had enabled the energies of the country to be put forth, increasing the general wealth and general resources out of which they must draw to meet the exigencies of war; and, therefore, they were in a better situation for meeting a state of war whenever it should arise. If they had given way to constant and jealous suspicions of other nations in time of peace, and kept up disproportionate establishments, which would have compelled them to keep up taxation, they would have prevented that increase of the general wealth and property of the country which, after all, was the true source of any addition to its power. This was his opinion, and one which he felt as strongly on whatever side of the House he sat; and certainly so long as he had had the honour to propose army estimates to Parliament, they were founded on these principles—namely, that while he thought due provision should be made for meeting any danger which was imminent, and while adequate means of national defence should be kept up, he would not press too heavily on the resources and revenue of the country. He did not think there were any further observations of the right hon. Gentleman which called for an answer, and therefore he would no longer trouble the House, except to repeat his opinion, that the force which had been provided was sufficient for the present emergency—and they had the means of increasing it very rapidly whenever occasion should require. He would mention one fact to show to them how much and how speedily the force could be increased whenever the necessity arose. That fact was, that in the course of last year, without any addition to the bounty, or any extraordinary measures being taken for recruiting, the number of recruits in thirteen months was 15,000; and when the order was issued for completing the complements of the army, the number of recruits in December and January was no less than 4,000.

Mr. *C. Buller* said, on one point he differed from the noble Lord—for he believed there never had been a motion of the hon. Member for Kilkenny for a reduction in our naval and military establishments that he had not supported. But he never, by any vote, had supported the absurdity, that peace establishments should be kept up in time of war. He was sorry that he did not see in the present Government one great advantage of a united Cabinet; namely a concert among Ministers as to the matters subjected to their different departments. It was a great pity, when the noble Lord determined on economy in the army, that he did not tell his colleague, the Minister for Foreign Affairs, to adopt a more modest and sensible tone with foreign Powers. It was a pity, too, that he did not inform his yet more ambitious colleague, the President of the Board of Control, when he could not afford more troops, that he must not think of conquering fresh empires in India. The noble Lord had said that it would be, on the whole, more expensive to maintain an additional regular force than to keep the volunteers in Canada. He (Mr. C. Buller) thought, that that question was not to be discussed as one of mere economy. There were important moral considerations involved in the question—whether, in order to keep any colony as a part of the British empire, it was right to have a portion of the inhabitants in pay to keep down the others? Would it not, also, be desirable that the colony should bear the temporary expense? With respect to the reference which had been made to the report of the Earl of Durham, he could not say, that he remembered the expression in question. If the noble Earl had stated, that the mere money expense of maintaining the Canadian militia was three times greater than would have been that of maintaining regular troops, such a statement was certainly inaccurate; but if the noble Earl meant, as he thought was more likely, that the amount drawn upon the whole, from the general resources of the country, by keeping up the one species of force was three times that of the other, then he had not overstated the fact. Lord Durham had read a letter only the other night, in another place, from Colonel Knowlton, in which he had described the intolerable mischief done to the agriculture of the country by keeping on foot the volunteers. With the expense of the militia, in general, he was acquainted; but as regarded the volunteers, and a portion of the militia which had recently been embodied, he had more information. He had calculated with a person in the colony, whose official position and profession rendered his opinion of great value, that the expense incurred by the measure of Sir G. Arthur and Sir J. Colborne, in calling out and embodying 11,000 men, militia and volunteers, could not be stated at less than one-third more than the ordinary expenses of the regulars in the same time. Let the House observe, that Sir G. Arthur was obliged to embody a great many of these troops for a year and a half; they would not serve else, so little was it possible to reduce this corps, and send them back to their homes at pleasure, as the noble Lord seemed to think. But, besides this, he was obliged to pay them a bounty, in order to prevail on them to take arms. He (Mr. C. Buller) said, therefore, that the whole expense of this force would in the end come to somewhere about the same thing as if the House were to order an addition of 18,000 men to the regular army. But even with all the addition thus made, the force had been insufficient. He should like to ask the noble Lord, if he knew in what state the fortress of Quebec had been left during the insurrection, and whether, with the present force, he could prevent the recurrence of a similar state of insecurity. Sir John Colborne did not think his situation so very safe. By great exertions, just enough of troops had been brought to Quebec to keep the garrison secure. The noble Lord talked of Sir J. Colborne's admirable arrangements for sending troops from Quebec to Halifax. Sir J. Colborne might be a very good soldier, but he was no conjuror; and that part of the country was almost absolutely impassable in winter time. But the noble Lord did not meet the real charge of neglect made out against the Government — namely, respecting the state in which New Brunswick was left. He did not know how many soldiers the noble Lord supposed there were in New Brunswick; but he had received an American paper that day which stated, that the whole amount of regulars was 500. [Sir *H. Hardinge:* 350 bayonets effective.] To oppose to that force the state of Maine had been regularly increasing its military force. He (Mr. Buller) had been told by an experienced military officer, that the militia of Maine was totally unlike the other American militia; that they were well kept up; for the Maine people felt very strongly a wish to fight for this territory, and that really they would be no contemptible adversaries of regular troops, to fight man to man. Was the noble Lord aware that there were more than 42,000 of this militia so trained? He had talked of the militia of New Brunswick. They were, he believed, a very gallant body, but they did not amount to more than 15,000, and they had only this number to oppose to 42,000 men. The noble Lord had said that Sir John Colborne would send troops over there; he would have to do so by a balloon, for he (Mr. Buller) did not know any other mode of conveying them in time. But what was to become of Upper and Lower Canada, if these troops were sent? Did they not suppose that the instant these troops were sent off, the sympathizers would not rise? He was inclined to say, that the mischief was much greater than the mere want of troops which was experienced in the province of New Brunswick was at present. The fact was, our whole military arrangements were utterly at variance with our foreign relations. He (Mr. Buller) was not afraid of the United States, gallant as they were; he believed the gallantry of England would be as great in a just cause. But there was no one with the feelings of humanity who could contemplate the horrors of such a war—not only a war between men of kindred origin, similar manners, and similar free institutions, but a war against industry and commerce. He really believed it would entail on both countries consequences fearful to humanity; it would seriously endanger and injure the social organization of both. But with these feelings of horror of war, ought our army arrangements to have been in such a state at this time when they might expect by the Liverpool, due on Sunday, the account of some collision, contrary to the will of both Governments? He would venture to say that never was there a time when the people of the United States were more friendly to us; never was there a time in which the great mass of the people felt more the advantages of peace and security, or a greater horror at the idea of war. But nations were not guided by their interests only, they were often guided by their passions; and the passions of a few intemperate men might bring on a collision, the consequences of which no man could tell. No people in the world were more sensitive of national honour than the Americans; and if a few lives should be lost amongst the lumberers on the borders of their territory, no one could tell what the consequences would be. The Governor of New Brunswick, to whom had been intrusted 500 or 350 men, set up claims never admitted by the American Government. He had set up a claim, equivalent in practice to the whole matter at issue; that until the dispute was settled by negotiation, Great Britain should have jurisdiction over the whole territory. It appeared that the orders of this Lieutenant-governor were to enforce this claim with his 350 or 500 men, and it appeared that the Governor of Maine said he would not submit to it; that he would send militia there. The Governor of New Brunswick said he was ordered to repel force by force. The Governor of Maine said he did not fear that; that the troops of Maine would do their duty. By the arrangement of Mr. Fox, this threatening aspect of affairs had been in some degree averted, and he had withdrawn the pretences of the Governor of New Brunswick. But, what a humiliating position was that which in the last hour retracted the claim set up over the disputed territory! In spite of the apparent imminence of a collision he did not seriously apprehend it. One thing would stop these proceedings, and that was, he believed that the only road up to this disputed territory on the Aroostook river was impassable, and the roads on the New Brunswick side were still worse, and this would prevent the forces getting at each other, unless Sir John Colborne could pass by balloons with his troops. But the grave charge against the Ministry is, that the present emergency had arisen on account of a dispute having been left open from 1815. The noble Lord, at the head of the Foreign Department, might say that was not his fault; that he did not make the treaty of 1783; that he had nothing to do with the treaty of 1815; but the noble Lord ought to have been aware that circumstances had arisen which made the Americans much more bent on having the territory than ever. It was important that this should be known. In the first place, the province of Maine had received a great increase of population. America had pressed on her old means of subsistence, and the population had moved off into the next vacant country, and had moved towards this disputed territory. Again, it was a very singular feature in the United States that all of a sudden the supply of pine timber had failed all over the United States; from the way in which they had wasted the timber they now suddenly found themselves without any fit for building. The whole of this disputed territory, which had been represented as of no value, was filled with the finest and most abundant quantity of this fine timber, which had, for the reason he had just stated, risen immensely in value. Many had gone there to obtain it; it was found that the land was very fine; people consequently wanted to go and settle there, and hence arose the increased desire of Maine to get possession of this country. In the present state of things in the disputed territory, it was perfectly obvious that collision must happen. Numbers of men could not live together without law, and they had recourse to the next authorities; and while one party had got the decision of a British magistrate, the other party had recourse to the next American station, about 100 miles off, and got an opposite decision, so that constant squabbles were kept up by this mode of governing the district. It must be obvious to any man of common sense, that that state of things could not last long between the subjects of two high-spirited nations; they must come to blows at last, and the Governments must take up the quarrel. Such had been the unaccountable negligence of our Government that this was, by no means, the only territory in dispute between us and the United States. The greater part of the frontier, for 1,500 miles, was disputed. That part on which we joined the United States on the east, and in which the territory in question was disputed with the States of Maine and Massachussets was a territory equal to the remaining part of the first mentioned State. He had forgotten one reason which made the people of Maine so bent on having this country. It was the sale of this territory which furnished the greater part of the revenue of these States, or almost the whole. Their revenue was, in great part, derived from the sale of lands. These States, therefore, thought it was their property which we were keeping from them, and right or wrong, they were very intent on keeping possession of what they thought was their property. Lower Canada came into dispute with New Hampshire next: a great portion of land there was disputed between us. That had been left as an open question. That might be very good policy for the Government to adopt with regard to questions of internal concerns. The Americans, however, had no idea of this nonsense of open questions; and what had the New Hampshire militia done? They had turned out every British subject who had got property in this disputed territory, and Englishmen were to be seen wandering about, utterly dispossessed of their lands. The States of Vermont and New York had a quarrel with us about the parallel of latitude. He did not know whether that quarrel was settled or not. The only thing he could state was a matter of fact, that the quarrel, as it was, had left every title of land along that strip of country under dispute. The next dispute was about the island on Lake Superior; but they might congratulate themselves, that dispute would not arise till four or five years hence, when the province of Wisconsin would be inhabited. Then another very important question arose between us and the United States, which would be very easily settled now, but might not hereafter: that was the dispute about the Oregon territory. This was a matter in which the Americans had very great interest, and in which they complained very much of our encroaching upon them; though he must notice as a proof of the pacific feelings of Congress that it had forborе to stir that question this year, in order not to multiply the causes of quarrel with us. Now, he would ask, was it prudent to allow these disputes to exist so long? He said it was the duty of that House to take every measure to compel her Majesty's Ministers to settle these disputes, which had remained so long unsettled, and the inconvenience of which they had so long experienced, that those horrors of war the noble Lord had described might be avoided. These disputes ought to be settled, because, leaving them open, was in every way bringing on quarrels. He wished before he sat down to say one thing, which he said with great pain, because he knew the kind of awkwardness it was for a man in any case, when his own country was in collision with foreigners in such a way that war was likely to be the consequence, to state these things. It was very dangerous and very imprudent for the citizen of one country to state his opinion in favour of the other country; nor did he mean to do so entirely. He believed very few Gentlemen of that House had really attended to the question of the boundary between Maine and New Brunswick and Lower Canada—such was the way in which they managed their foreign business. Circumstances had induced him to attend to it, and he would state that he had never met one Englishman who had read the account who did not agree with him (Mr. C. Buller) in saying, that whatever might be the justice of the claim of the Americans, the claim set up by the British Government was the most preposterous and absurd that ever was heard of in British diplomacy. He wished to be particularly guarded in not letting it be supposed that he thought the American claim a just one; he did not think it a just one; but he must say, looking only to the claim advanced by us in our negotiation, he could not conceive a rightful cause so much prejudiced by unjust negotiation as our cause had been. What he wanted to call the attention of the House to was, that this was a very general feeling throughout the United States. The people of that country had naturally attended to the question; they had a very strong notion of the entire justice of their claim; he (Mr. Buller) did not say whether they were right or wrong; all he said was, they felt very strongly on the subject. The feeling was very high in the United States, and it was a matter that would not admit of postponement any longer. If we intended to adhere to the pretensions we had advanced, we ought to be prepared for war, and give up the idea of peace. But if we were to do our utmost to avoid the horrors of war, it was our duty to see instantly, and without delay, that negotiations were established on a stable and fair basis, which might secure, not only our rights, but the rights of the United States. That security alone was the only secure foundation of a permanent peace between the two nations.

Viscount *Palmerston* could not find fault with the hon. Member who had just sat down for having stated his opinions. But, at the same time, he must say, he should entertain some doubt how far the speech of the hon. and learned Gentleman was calculated to afford any additional facilities for the settlement of this question; because, no doubt, from a high sense of duty, he had made those statements; but when he knew, as everybody did, that questions of great importance to each country had been pending for now more than half a century, it might, he thought, be sufficient evidence that this question would not have remained unsettled so long if it had not been attended with great and inherent difficulties, and he doubted whether those inherent difficulties would be diminished by the tone of levity with which the hon. Gentleman had treated them, or by the opinions which he had expressed. He differed from the hon. Gentleman as to the opinion he had given of the nature of the claims of this country. Our claims had not been put forward by him nor by his predecessor, nor by the person who went before him; they were claims which had been put forward by Great Britain ever since the treaty of 1783. He must say, that, having given great attention to the nature of these claims, as was his duty, and to the claims of the United States, his opinion differed entirely from the hon. Member's. He must say, that our claims were well founded, on a fair interpretation of the treaty. But the hon. Gentleman had ridiculed the idea of transporting masses of men over a desert by mere volition; but he (Lord Palmerston) thought, when he talked in this easy good-humoured way, that "these questions ought to be settled," and "why don't you settle them, that matters may not be allowed to remain in dispute between the two countries upon which war can arise"—he (Lord Palmerston) thought the hon. Member was ignorant of the question itself, or, for the sake of making some little effect in the debate, he had passed over matters to which he ought to have given more serious attention. It was quite true that there were these questions in dispute. There was, first of all, pending the question of the boundary from Mar's-hill to Connecticut river. It was perfectly true, that there was pending and undecided the question of the boundary between Ingoldstad and Holstein. It was perfectly true, that there was pending and undecided a question, what was the parallel of the 45th degree of latitude, and whether this was to be a question, as we contended, which ought to be settled by astronomical observation; or whether it was to be, as the United States contended, determined by geocentric measurement. These were the questions which were referred, by the treaty, to the arbitration of the king of the Netherlands, two of which questions the king of the Netherlands decided. He decided which was the head of the Connecticut river, and in what way the 45th parallel of latitude was to be ascertained. He did not decide the other point, but stated, that neither the line of England nor of the United States was strictly in the treaty of 1783. The Government had made this one of the first questions they had taken in hand, and whatever they might think of that part of the award, which consisted of a recommendation for a division of territory, and though it was an unfavourable award for England, inasmuch as it gave two-thirds of the disputed territory to the United States, yet the English Government, from a desire of peace and the desire of a settlement of this question, had, without the slightest hesitation, signified to the United States that they accepted that award, and they were prepared to abide by it. What more could the Government have done? Did the hon. Gentleman know they had done so? And if he did, why did he presume to taunt the Government with an indisposition to settle this? The United States had refused that award. Although two points were clearly and decidedly determined by the king of the Netherlands, because the third point was not determined—and he had only made a recommendation for a settlement between the parties—on that account the award was null. He (Lord Palmerston) said it was their fault, and not ours, that this question had not been settled; and that, therefore, those points to which the hon. and learned Gentleman had alluded, which had remained hitherto, and were at this moment, in dispute between the two countries, remained so not by the fault of the English Government that they could not complete the legal award. Now, there was no doubt, that, as the hon. and learned Gentleman had said, there might be every year an increasing desire on the part of the state of Maine to get possession of the disputed territory, but that was no reason why we should relinquish our claim to it. No doubt each party thought itself right, but what the Government of England sought was, to endeavour to settle the geographical question, and if that could not be done on the grounds stated in 1783, perhaps each party might be disposed to enter into a convention on the question. Any one who had heard the statement of the hon. and learned Gentleman (Mr. C. Buller) would have imagined, judging from that only, that the claim of this country was one which had been set up by him (Lord Palmerston); but if the hon. and learned Gentleman had taken the trouble to read the able note of Lord Aberdeen on the subject addressed to Mr. Lawrence in 1828, and the notes of Mr. Vaughan on the same subject, he would have found that the grounds on which we rested our claim had been fully made out, and that the claim was not of recent date, but one which had been made by those who had gone long before the present Government.

The hon. and learned Gentleman said that our claim of jurisdiction over the disputed territory was begging the whole question on our part; but it was clear that one or other of the two countries must be responsible for the preservation of order and for preventing a set of lawless borderers on either side from annoying the subjects of both states; to that extent our claim of jurisdiction went, and, as might be seen by the able note of Lord Aberdeen, having had possession of the country before the treaty of 1783, we had a *primâ facie* claim to that jurisdiction; but that claim did not extend to a right of sovereignty, and we had abstained from giving licences to cut timber on the disputed territory, as had also the American government. If the hon. and learned Member would refer to the accounts which lately appeared in the newspapers—and he had no later intelligence from the same quarter—he would see from the letters of Sir J. Harvey that he did not defend the lumberers, and did not sanction their acts in cutting down timber on the disputed ground. The hon. and learned Member had adverted to the question of the boundary on the Pacific coast, and had asked, why had not that question been settled, as if nothing was more easy than that settlement. Now, if the hon. and learned Member would look back to what took place on that subject, he would find that the settlement of the question was not so easy as he seemed to think. He would find that the adjustment of it had been put off for ten years, in order to get rid of some of the difficulties attending it; and considering these circumstances, he would probably feel disposed to retract his assertion that the matter was of so easy settlement. But it was said, that, unless this question was settled by our giving up our claims altogether, we must maintain a much larger force in our American colonies than we at present kept there. He agreed with his noble Friend (Lord Howick), that the parties acting against both countries should be brought to order by each; but if the acts of one party should be sanctioned by the United States government, then would come a state of war, which he agreed would be to be deplored; but, knowing, as they did, the disposition of the government of the United States to avoid a war, they were acting with a friendly Power which was equally with themselves desirous of maintaining peace between the two countries. He, therefore, could not allow himself to think, that not being engaged, or not being likely to be engaged, in war, we ought to put our army on a war establishment, or that we ought to keep up an establishment beyond what was necessary to keep down internal disturbances. As to the argument of the right hon. and gallant Officer, (Sir H. Hardinge), that we should keep up what might be called a war establishment in time of peace, he thought that was a matter on which the Government would exercise due diligence and precaution, but he did not think that a Government would be justified in prematurely calling on the country to make those sacrifices which a state of war would require; for according to the view of the right hon. and gallant Officer, there was no part of the world in which we now had a military force in which that force ought not to have a large addition — not with reference to peace, but to an immediate probability of war. The right hon. and gallant Officer had said, that Bermuda should be put into a state of more complete defence from the fear of an attack on the part of the United States. No doubt, if we were at war with the United States, that would be necessary; but he again repeated, that that event was not probable, and that there was no ground to fear its occurrence. He thought, therefore, that his noble Friend (Viscount Howick) was right in limiting his demand to what was necessary at present, and if occasion should arise, he was glad to see a disposition on the part of hon. Gentlemen on the opposite side to aid the Government in voting such supplies as circumstances of war might render necessary.

Lord *A. Lennox* said, that having travelled many hundred miles in America he could bear his testimony to the general wish of the Americans for a continuance of peace between the two countries. With respect to the army he would suggest, that bronze medals should be given to soldiers in substitution for the paltry stripes which were given at present as a mark of distinction or merit. The system of recruiting now adopted was quite unfair towards the soldier; indeed, it was in most cases an absolute fraud, as the man before entering was promised a bounty of 4*l.* or 5*l.*, and afterwards was brought in debt for five or six months, upon joining his corps, which gave the men a disgust to the service, and led to frequent desertion, both abroad and at home. The vote of 2,000*l.* for establishing libraries for the soldiers was well deserving of support, and as he was upon the subject he should remark, that a great improvement might be effected in the habits of the soldiers by directing the barrack masters to provide quoits and similar means of amusement for the men, which would keep them from resorting so frequently, as they did at present, to the canteen.

Mr. *C. Buller* said, that the noble Lord the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, had misunderstood the spirit in which he had alluded to the boundary question in dispute between this country and the United States. He had particularly guarded himself against expressing any opinion upon the merits of the claim of the United States, though he had stated an opinion that the grounds advanced by the negociators of this country were bad. The peculiar feature of this question was, that it was not a dispute as to the right to a certain well-defined territory, but as to boundaries which had never yet been defined; and upon this point he still maintained that the position taken up by this country, going by the evidence of all the old charters and acts that at all bore upon the matter, was untenable; and he at the same time expressed a hope that the noble Lord would, with the least possible delay, consult the substantial interests of all parties, by taking up a fair and tenable position. He begged it to be understood that he did not cast the blame of all the delay which had already taken place in this negotiation upon the noble Lord; on the contrary, he was aware that a great deal of it had taken place before the noble Lord came into office; but he still thought that the noble Lord had not acted, he would not say with sufficient ability, for no one could doubt the noble Lord's brilliant abilities, but with that degree of promptitude which we had a right to expect from so liberal and skilful a politician.

Sir *J. C. Hobhouse* said, that he did not wish to enter into the general subjects, which had been under debate this evening, but merely to say a few words in answer to what fell from the right hon. and gallant Gentleman opposite on the subject of the army in India. He was inclined to do so the more as the statements which he had on a former occasion made on this subject appeared to have been misunderstood, and he thought the importance of the subject required that no misapprehension of the kind should exist in respect to it. The statements which he had made on the occasion referred to, on the condition of the Indian army, were these, that since last October there had been a considerable increase made in it, and that an increase had been also gradually going on ever since the year 1834, amounting to 24,000 men. He had never stated that that army was of the same extent as after the close of the Burmese war, and the right hon. and gallant Gentleman was perfectly justified in saying that the military establishments of India, both as regarded the native army and the Queen's troops, were considerably lower than at that period. The right hon. and gallant Gentleman was no doubt aware that a great reduction took place in the year 1828, when the Duke of Wellington was in office, and that up to the year 1834 reductions had been gradually made, but that since the latter period some small augmentations had taken place. But he perfectly agreed with the right hon. and gallant Gentleman that further augmentations were still necessary to keep the frontier army in the state it should be; and in reply to Lord Auckland's announcement of the augmentations which had already taken place, the Government had stated not only that they approved of those augmentations, but that if any further augmentations were found necessary they should be prepared to acquiesce in them. Not only had he intimated this to the Government of India, but he himself had taken the precaution so as not to depend entirely upon the local government to require that an additional force of her Majesty's troops should be sent out from this country: and the hon. and learned Member for Liskeard, who had indulged in so much humour on this subject, though not perhaps with his usual felicity, would be glad to hear that the rest of her Majesty's Ministers were unanimous in concurring with him in these views. As he stated, he had asked for an increase of the Queen's troops in India, and in making that reinforcement, he should certainly have been glad if it could be done by sending out complete and perfect regiments ready equipped; but seeing that to effect this would be quite out of the question, the next best course was taken, namely, to recruit men with the utmost speed, and send them out as circumstances permitted. Now, though these troops were paid out of the Indian revenues, he trusted that this circumstance would not be considered as an excuse for any augmentation which was not justified by the occasion, but that any hon. Members who might entertain the least doubts as to the propriety of these reinforcements would use as much vigilance in questioning them as if they formed part of the regular estimates of the army. He hoped the right hon. and gallant Gentleman would excuse him from entering upon a review of the policy of Lord Auckland, on the present occasion; but, out of respect to the high authority of the noble Duke who had been referred to, he had thought it right to say what he had done in regard to our military establishment in India, in order to show that it was not in a lower state than on any previous occasion. It having been thought necessary to draw a military line along the boundary of Nepaul, it was obvious that this could not be effected without a considerable increase of troops; and though he did not pretend to be a military authority, yet he was given to understand by military men of the greatest experience, that the means taken by the Government of India for this purpose were such as if not now absolutely sufficient, yet to hold out every prospect of their being very shortly upon an ample scale of efficiency. He had also the satisfaction to assure the right hon. and gallant Gentleman that the Government were fully alive to the affairs which were passing in the Burmese States, and a force had been sent down to the frontiers of that State, and, as the House was aware, those frontiers were of a nature to require naval as well as military observation, precautions had been taken in both these respects. With respect to this, and some other points of Indian affairs touched upon by the right honourable and gallant Gentleman, he thought that he would find, when all the circumstances were before the public, that a great deal of exaggeration and unfounded alarm had been excited through the agency of the press, with the establishment of which so many Gentlemen appeared to have been so well satisfied. The right hon. and gallant Gentleman had alluded to a question affecting the natives of India, particularly of Bengal, namely the resumption law. He knew the disposition which existed in India on these questions, and how actively the press of India was engaged in discussing them. He had no apprehension, however, of these discussions leading to any danger of our army marching from one end of the Indian Empire to the other. There was no man who admitted the magnitude of this question more readily than himself, and he hoped that the argument made use of by the right hon. Baronet the Member for Tamworth at the beginning of the Session would prevail, namely that it was time to give up all party discussions, and to take up those which had been too long neglected and delayed, particularly the question of India. Whenever the day came for the consideration of that subject, he trusted the House would enter upon it in such a manner as would lead to a fair and impartial discussion.

Mr. *Hume* had no fear about India. There had been different statements published on this subject in the public papers, but he thought, that the advantage of a free press must not be denied, because both sides now and then fell into exaggeration. This was not the time for discussing the question of India, for they had only defective materials on which to ground their estimate of the present state of that country. It was impossible to say what turn affairs would take there on both sides of the Indus; but, if war were declared necessary, he certainly hoped it would be carried on with vigour. On that account it was, that he gave, and did now give, Lord Auckland great credit for assembling an overwhelming force for carrying into effect the diplomatic arrangements in which he had been recently engaged. Nothing was so likely to produce a speedy conclusion of that matter as the immediately assembling an army of 30,000 men; and of course with an alteration of the circumstances, that army was broken up. With respect to Canada, he was amused with the right hon. Gentleman opposite taking up the established principle of 1829 for the army, and he wished he had gone back to former years, to 1822, when the army was 71,000; 1823, when it was 72,000; 1824, when it was 76,000; 1825, when it was 86,000; and also to the next two years, when it was about the same number, all of which were below the present number. The arguments of the right hon. Gentleman did not in any way support the necessity of keeping a large army in Canada. Was it not lamentable, that we should have 48,000 men sent to the distant parts of that colony, and that from our injustice to her we should be obliged to keep a permanent army there of 13,000 men? He entirely disapproved of the course which the Government, supported by that House, had taken, when they passed that unjust and wicked measure for depriving the colonists of their just rights. It was said, that Sir John Colborne and Sir George Arthur were obliged to engage the men in the militia service in Canada, some for a year, and others for half a year; but was it possible, that we could require more than the 13,000 which the Secretary at War had admitted to be in that country, that was in a state of peace, and when we were looking forward to the Government preserving it in peace for the future. With respect to the interference of the Americans, he thought the Government had acted wisely in not showing any jealousy whatever, and in taking the statements of the President of the United States as being honest. He would also go further and say, that the Government ought to make up their minds, that if the Americans should unfortunately make any attempts against Canada, we were unable to protect her. They might talk of the peace of that country, and protecting the colonist, but he wanted to know for what purpose was it? Was it fair, that we should throw away a hundred millions of money in a war for its protection? It would be utterly impossible to save it; and it was, therefore, a wise policy of the Government which they were taking, not to raise jealousies with America, but to have the dispute about the boundaries settled in an amicable manner as speedily as possible. The right hon. Gentleman had not used one argument to prove, that the Government were acting contrary to that to which he had belonged respecting the present matter. He hoped, that the establishment would now be amply sufficient. He should himself say it was more than sufficient to answer all purposes. The Government had done right to fill up the establishment, to supply the necessary wants of the army, but he thought they had gone to the utmost extent which the circumstances of the country would warrant. He thought, also, that the arrangement which the noble Lord was about to make, as to the situation and comforts of the soldiers in barracks was a wise, excellent, and economical measure. As to rewarding the men for good conduct, it was what the country had called for, and the Government might be satisfied, that they would not refuse anything to effect so desirable an object. He would just refer to another point, and that was the odious system of flogging. The Government must not believe, that things could pass now as they did formerly; there might then have been six floggings in a week, but no instance ever took place now without its being noticed in the papers over and over again. That certainly was one advantage of newspapers; for they had brought this subject forward in every shape and form. He was willing to go to any expense in order to put down that system of torture, and thought, that what the noble Lord had pointed out would tend much to effect it. The noble Lord had spoken of establishing libraries in the barracks, and rewards for good conduct, and he wished to know to what extent these rewards were intended to be carried, as to promoting deserving men from the ranks to commissions, and particularly to what extent they had been carried during the last year. There was also another point on which he would just remark, namely, that the proportion of officers to the number of men in the army of this country, was greater than in that of any other, and was much too large. To that he objected; and it should be inquired into how far any reduction could be made. The present staff was also larger than we had ever had before, and, in proportion to the number of men, was greater than that of any other country. This was the only respect in which any reductions could be made. In the English army many officers procured commissions merely for rank and amusement, not intending to pursue it as a profession. The consequence of this was a frequent changing of officers, so that it need be no matter of surprise, that our army was more expensive and possessed fewer officers who had seen service than that of any other country. Whether the army could be reduced without rendering it less efficient, he was not prepared to say. He had rather see it brought back to what it was in the time of the right hon. Gentleman opposite; for he bore in mind, that when we had a strong military force ready, as in Mr. Canning's time, we were too apt to bully our neighbours, and to meddle in the affairs of others, at the same time neglecting our own.

Viscount *Howick* wished just to reply to the questions which had been put to him by his hon. Friend the Member for Kilkenny. He could not precisely state to what extent the rewards alluded to had been carried last year, but he could say that whenever a quartermastership had become vacant, it had been filled up from the ranks. The vacancies of ensigncies had not always been supplied in the same manner, though sometimes it had been the case, and every opportunity had been otherwise taken of promoting deserving men. With respect to the large proportion of officers to the number of men, he did not think his hon. Friend was correct, for he had referred to a return of the French army estimates for the year 1834, and found that in that army there were 10,979 officers to 238,533 men, being in the proportion of one to 21½; whilst in the English army in the present year there were 4,520 officers to 84,831 men, being about one to 18¾. The proportion certainly appeared to be less in France; but the cause was, that all the staff duty was done by the *corps d'etat major*, and the duty of recruiting was discharged by the conscription, whilst in England the staff duty was performed by subalterns on full pay.

Captain *Boldero* regretted to hear the statement made by the hon. Member for Liskeard, which, considering the situation that hon. Member had lately filled in Canada, was calculated, in his opinion, to embarrass the settlement of the dispute respecting the boundary. It appeared, from the speech of the noble Lord, the Secretary at War, that the number of militia and volunteers in that colony amounted to 38,000 men. Now, as the expense of this force was one-third greater than that of regular troops, he believed that the cost could not fall short of 1,500,000*l.*, and that the whole amount of the extraordinary expenditure for Canada during the last year would amount to 3,000,000*l.* He wished to know from the noble Lord why it was proposed to increase the Cape corps of mounted riflemen? It was not long ago that a court-martial had convicted sixteen men belonging to that corps of traitorous designs, and two of them were executed, the rest being punished by transportation for life. He also wished to advert to the small amount of pension allowed to soldiers after a service of twenty-five and twenty-eight years. The pension was only 6*d.* a-day for privates, 10*d.* for corporals, and 1*s.* for sergeants. He thought the pension ought to be increased, for at present it was no inducement to good men to enter the service.

Sir *De Lacy Evans* thought that the noble Lord had completely answered the statements of the right hon. Gentleman opposite. With regard to Canada, he (Sir De Lacy Evans) believed that at no period of our history had we there a force so large, so efficient, and so united as it was at present. And then everything in connexion with the present position of the United States was quite satisfactory, so that no serious consequences could be expected in that quarter. There was no sufficient ground for the alarm which the speech of the right hon. Baronet was calculated to create. With respect to Jamaica, he (Sir De Lacy Evans) saw no cause for apprehension there, and he was of opinion that, as far as concerned any attempt on the part of America, the Bermudas had a competent garrison. In India, too, there was little ground for fear, inasmuch as in the only country which war could be apprehended with, Burmah, a rebellion had broken out against the sovereign hostile to Great Britain. He deprecated anything like anticipating discussions on the military operations of our armies in the north-east of that country, and he would put it to the right hon. Baronet whether they were not more calculated to encourage than to repress the native princes opposed to us? There were no grounds for the right hon. Baronet's statement that an insurrection of the interior of India was to be looked for or apprehended. He concurred with the observations of the hon. Member for Kilkenny on the policy of reducing the force on the frontier of the United States contiguous to the disputed territory in New Brunswick, and he felt bound to say that there was not, in his opinion, any foundation for the general charge of inefficiency brought against the military force of the country.

Sir *H. Hardinge*, in explanation, said, that the noble Lord had refused to state the amount of the military force at present stationed in Nova Scotia and New Brunswick. This was where was the pinch of the question. He complained that the force of regular troops in that part of our dominions was too small. We had but 50,000 troops abroad, and 26,000 at home, about the proportion of two abroad to one at home, and this was too hard work. The army was certainly bound to undergo any temporary hardship, but if this arrangement was to be permanent, it would be impossible to go on.

Vote agreed to, as were several other votes.

On the vote of 102,000*l.* for the pay of general officers,

Mr. *Hume* objected to the large amount of the half-pay of general officers, and to brevets, which tended to increase that amount; and he referred to the arrangement respecting the dead weight in 1822, which he contended, had occasioned a serious loss to the country.

Viscount *Howick* was not called upon to defend the arrangement of 1822, which he thought was a loan in disguise. The half-pay had, in fact, been reduced; and with respect to brevets, they were necessary, in order to bring on young general officers.

Sir *H. Hardinge* said, that Mr. Collins, of the War-office, who had been examined in the Committee to which the hon. Member (Mr. Hume) referred, had beaten the hon. Member in argument more than man had ever been beaten, and had showed the advantages of the arrangement of 1822. With regard to brevets, since the peace, taking the officers on half-pay and on full pay, there had been a reduction of 7,168 commissioned officers, and a saving to the amount of 1,300,000*l.* a-year.

Mr. *Hume* admitted that there was a person who had made some statements in the Committee; but if those statements were examined, it would be found that they could not be maintained. He would prove hereafter, that whilst there were reduction in some departments, there had been an increase in others, so that the dead weight was still 5,000,000*l.*

Mr. *C. Wood* said, he had now got the report of the Committee to which he had referred, and he found that, though it confined rewards to officers on half-pay, there was an exception in favour of distinguished services. His conclusion had been formed from the mention of half-pay, that they should be held with half-pay, and not with full pay. If a different practice prevailed in the army, he should be happy to have an opportunity of altering it in the navy.

Sir *J. Graham* agreed with the hon. Member that the arrangement was an exceedingly bad one; but he had not had a doubt, at the time when the report was prepared, that officers, if their services had been so distinguished as to entitle them to rewards for merits, would hold them with full pay.

Sir *H. Hardinge* said, that, as a Member of that Committee, he had suggested the addition in favour of officers of distinguished merit. It would be a great hardship upon an officer in the receipt of a reward of 200*l.* a-year, which he would lose on being put on full pay, if, when he returned to half-pay, his vacant situation was filled up; he would have no reward whatever.

Sir *G. Clerk* said, that the officers of the navy were exposed to unequal hardship. In the army, if an officer had a staff situation, he could hold it with full pay; but if an officer of the navy was appointed to the command of a ship, it was only temporary, and he returned to half-pay without any reward. He regretted that honorary appointments were done away with, such as that of colonel of marines.

Sir *C. Adam* said, it was with extreme pain the Board of Admiralty had felt itself bound to read the report of the Committee in the terms, and to put the construction on it stated by his hon. Friend near him (Mr. C. Wood). It was, however, with extreme satisfaction he had heard the opinions which had been expressed by hon. Members opposite, and he not only should be glad to see Captain Napier's name restored, but that it should be done to-morrow.

Vote agreed to, as were several others. House resumed.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Saturday, March 23, 1839.

MINUTES.] Bill. Read a second time:—Duke of Wellington's Estate.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Monday, March 25, 1839.

MINUTES.] Bills. Read a second time:—Tithe Composition Arrears (Ireland).—Read a third time:—Duke of Wellington's Estate.

Petitions presented. By the Bishop of BANGOR, from several places in that See, against applying the Surplus Revenues of the Bishopric of St. Asaph's otherwise than to Amending poor Livings in the United See.—By the Earl of Camperdown, and Lord Brougham, from several places, for a Uniform Penny Postage.—By Lord Brougham, and Viscount Melbourne, from several places, against the Beer-laws.—By Lord Brougham, from a great number of places, for the Immediate and Total Repeal of the Corn-laws, and all other Restrictions on Free Trade. —By the Archbishop of Canterbury, from Blackburn, and a place in Sussex, against any plan of National Education not founded on the Scriptures.—By the Earl of Aberdeen, from several places, and Lord Wharncliffe, from several places, for Church Extension in Scotland.—By the Earls of Bandon, Roden, and Tankerville, against the Repeal of the Corn-laws.—By Viscount Melbourne, from Ceylon, for Steam Communication between that place and Madras.—By the Bishop of Chester, from nine Ecclesiastical bodies in the Diocese of Bangor, for Amending the Act 7th William 4th, chap. 7.—By the Earl of Charleville, from the Magistrates of Queen's County, for Inquiry into the Outrages lately perpetrated there.—By Lord Lifford, from some place, for the Repeal of part of the Poor-law Act.

Government of Ireland.] The Earl of *Charleville* presented a Petition from certain magistrates of the Queen's county, praying that their Lordships would adopt measures to secure protection for the lives and properties of the loyal inhabitants of Ireland, which he moved should be referred to the Committee on the state of Ireland.

Lord *Rossmore* said, he did not attach the same importance to the petition as the noble Earl. In the first place, it was signed by only some of the magistrates, although the county had been canvassed for signatures to it. No one could doubt that it had been got up for the purpose of backing the proceedings at the meeting at Tullamore. But the allegations made at that meeting had been amply refuted at a general county meeting, at which the high sheriff presided in person; and, moreover, most of the magistrates who had signed the petition confessed that they had taken advantage of a meeting convened for the laudable purpose of detecting crime, to turn it into a party meeting. These assertions were borne out by letters which he had received, one of which was from a magistrate of forty-two years standing, who said he never knew the country in such a state of peace and quietness as at the present moment.

The Earl of *Charleville* said, at the meeting alluded to by the noble Lord, it had been determined, after due deliberation, to petition both Houses of Parliament and to address her Majesty on this subject. The petition and address were immediately prepared, and some time was required to procure signatures to it. Of the sixty-five magistrates who had signed the requisition for the meeting, many were not present when it was held, and it became necessary to apply to them for their signatures. That was all the application that had been made.

Petition laid on the Table.

Duke of Wellington's Estate.] Viscount *Duncannon*, in moving the third reading of the Duke of Wellington's Estate Bill, said it was intended by this bill to enable the noble Duke to make a sufficient settlement on his eldest son, in the event of his marriage; and also to preserve in his family as an heir-loom for ever, certain most valuable and costly ornaments and other presents which had been made to him by the different potentates of Europe.

Lord *Brougham* was glad that the noble Viscount had clearly stated the merits of the bill, which would pass as a matter of course, because the Legislature in agreeing to the bill by which a certain annuity was secured to the Duke of Wellington evidently intended not merely to give the noble Duke an opportunity to jointure his own widow, but to enable him to jointure the Marchioness of Douro, should the Marquess of Douro marry during the life of his father. As to the other part of the bill, which secured as an heir-loom the jewels and other valuables that had been presented to the Duke of Wellington, it was on the part of the Duke an extremely generous procedure, for, it was in his power to sell for many thousand pounds those valuables, and to make what use he pleased of the money.

Bill read a third time.

Corn-Laws—Explanation.] Lord *Brougham* said, he had to present petitions from certain unhappy persons, who either were or ought to be confined in lunatic asylums in different parts of the island, because, according to what the noble Viscount near him (Melbourne) had laid down the other night, those who were in favour of a repeal of the Corn-laws, must, of course, needs be in a fit condition for confinement in such places. Accordingly the inhabitants of Great Torrington, and other lunatics, had signed the petitions he held in his hand, and prayed for a total repeal of all restrictions. Another petition which he had was from the inhabitants of Great and Little Wolston, and another place in Lancashire, who only prayed that a strict inquiry might be instituted on this subject, and who therefore were only verging on a condition to call for confinement in a lunatic asylum.

Viscount *Melbourne* said, that his observation was applied to those who stated, that there should be an immediate repeal, not only of all duties on corn, but also of all other prohibitive and protective duties at once, without further consideration.

Petitions laid on the Table.

CANADIAN PRISONERS.] Lord *Brougham* rose to move for a series of returns connected with the Canadian prisoners now in Newgate, of which he had given notice on Friday night.

The Marquess of *Normanby* did not think, that the returns ought to be laid before the House while the case of the prisoners was still under the consideration of a court of law.

Lord *Brougham* thought there was something in the objection, and would not press his motion. There were, however, other returns which he thought might be supplied—namely, returns of prisoners tried since the 1st of November, 1837, the result of those trials, and the sentences that had been passed. He wished now to state, that he had been informed, that certain other persons had been brought to this country from Canada, who did not belong to the same class of prisoners as those who were now confined in Newgate. Those parties to whom he alluded had been actually, as he was informed, tried and convicted in Canada; they had been brought over to this country under the Act of 1st of Victoria, and had since been sent to New South Wales. His objection to this course of proceeding was, first, that the amnesty was intended to extend even to persons who were taken with arms in their hands. Those persons had escaped altogether, and, that being so, he could not see the justice of punishing individuals who were much less guilty. These were cases to which he thought mercy might, with much grace and propriety, be extended. He must, in the next place, protest against treating those people who were political offenders, if they were to be sent to New South Wales, as they treated common highwaymen, housebreakers, and thieves, by sending them away without any distinction. discrimination, or classification in convict ships. It had been the policy of the wisest and most humane states in every age to draw a distinction in the punishment of political and common offenders, and justly so. When a common felon found that men of a better situation in life were for a political offence treated in the same way as himself, the effect was, that it raised the felon in his own estimation, and prevented his feeling that proper level of shameful position to which his offence ought, and which it was the object of the penal law, to bring him in the eyes of the public. He did not wish to revive the controversy on the subject, but he could not avoid expressing a hope, that he had been misinformed in this respect, but if he had not been misinformed, that the Government would pay some attention to the principle for which he contended.

The Marquess of *Normanby* suggested, that even though there might be no objection to the returns, it was much more convenient that notice should be given. With regard to the other question put by the noble and learned Baron, although he had given no orders himself of the nature alluded to touching other convicts, he would make inquiry into the matter. As to the first return mentioned, the objection was, that the prisoners were now waiting under proceedings of the legal tribunals of this country, and he apprehended that generally there must be an objection to the production by the Government of the opinions of the law officers of the Crown.

Lord *Brougham* said, generally speaking, that objection was valid, but in the present instance it did not apply, inasmuch as the opinions of the Attorney and Solicitor-General had already been shortly furnished to the House, as well as the opinion, *in extenso*, of the Attorney-General of the island of Bermuda.

The Marquess of *Normanby* replied, that he believed the production of those opinions had been absolutely necessary.

Notice of a motion for the following day given.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Monday, March 25, 1839.

MINUTES.] Bill. Read a first time:—Preparation of Writs (Scotland); Heritable Securities (Scotland).—Read a second time:—Mutiny; Marine Mutiny.

Petitions presented. By Sir E. L. BULWER, from one place, against the Double and Treble Costs Bill.—By Mr. BROADLEY, from the Board of Guardians of a Parish in the East Riding (York), against parts of the Poor-law

Act.—By Sir Matthew Wood, Mr. Clay, and Mr. Pattison, from six parishes in the City of London, against the Metropolitan Police Bill.—By Mr. Leader, Mr. R. Palmer, Mr. A. White, Sir R. Ferguson, Mr. Loch, Mr. Villiers, and Mr. Ellice, jun., from a very great number of places, for a Uniform Penny Postage.—By Lord James Stuart, from Arran, Mr. Blair, from Wigton, Mr. Lockhart, from Glasgow, Sir James Graham, from Glasgow, and Sir George Sinclair, from several places, for Church Extension in Scotland.—By Mr. Villiers, from Wolverhampton, for the Repeal of the Corn-laws.—By Captain Wood, from Staines, against any further Grant to Maynooth College; also against the Beer-laws.—By Mr. Percival, from Sligo, against the Appointment of Lord Fortescue to the Lord-Lieutenancy of Ireland.—By Sir R. Inglis, from a number of places, against the Ecclesiastical Duties and Revenues Bill; and for Church Extension in Canada.—By Mr. Pakington, from some place, against the Beer-laws.—By Mr. Sanford, from Wellington, for a comprehensive system of National Education.—By the Attorney-General, from Edinburgh, against any Tax on Steam-boats.—By Mr. Pease, from Belfast, for the Repeal of the Stage Coach Act.—By Lord Ashley, from Troubridge, for the Repeal of the Corn-laws.

Government of Ireland.] Sir *R. Peel* begged to ask the noble Lord, the Secretary of State, in consequence of a regulation of the House respecting the fixing of notices, if he would place upon the notice book the day upon which he meant to bring forward the motion of which he gave a general notice on Friday, and which had reference to recent proceedings in the other House of Parliament? It would be for the general convenience of the House if the noble Lord would intimate the day upon which he proposed to bring it forward.

Lord *J. Russell* observed, he had no difficulty in answering the question. He had already said, that he would bring forward the motion referred to, the week after the recess, as it was necessary it should be disposed of at as early a day as possible. He would now fix it for Thursday, the 11th of April.

Suspension of Ecclesiastical Appointments.] Lord *J. Russell*, in moving the Order of the Day for going into Committee on the Ecclesiastical Appointments Suspension Bill, observed, that although he stated the object of the clause he meant to introduce in giving notice of it the other evening, yet, as attacks had been made, not only upon him, but upon a near relative of his, who, he thought, had been very unnecessarily brought into question, he felt that he should claim the indulgence of the House while he stated the fact respecting the proposal he had to make. It had been asserted that the object of the clause he was now going to introduce was to enable a near relative of his to fill the deanery of Exeter, which he would not otherwise be able to fill. Whoever made that statement must have made it either without having read the clause, or having read it, must have mis-stated it. The object of the clause was, that the Bill now in operation should "not prevent the collation or appointment of a canon or prebendary to any canonry or prebend which shall become vacant by reason of the vacancy of any deanery in any cathedral or collegiate church." What he had explained to the House was, that it had been found by quite an unintentional mistake that the bill did not confer the power of filling up prebends in those cases where it had been usual for the Crown to appoint the dean, and where the dean could not be appointed except he had previously held the prebend. It was, therefore, thought fit to remedy the omission. It certainly had been stated to him by some members of the Church Commission, that as the mistake in the original bill was unintentional, it would be well that the clause should apply to vacancies now existing as well as to any that might hereafter exist. He had, however, thought it would be much better that no suspicion should interfere with the operation of the law now in force, and therefore had declined to make the clause apply to any vacancy now existing, and to those only hereafter existing. After the manner in which the person in question, his near relative, had been spoken of in connexion with this subject, he thought he should be permitted to state that, in recommending him to the favour of the Crown, through the Prime Minister, he knew he was recommending a person who was an ornament to the Church. He likewise knew, in asking that this particular deanery of Exeter should be conferred on him, that if it should be found, which it had been, by the joint opinions of the law officers of the Crown and Sir W. Follett, that the Crown could not appoint, he knew that it would not be any disappointment to his relative not to receive the intended preferment. He knew that, not only from his long and affectionate intimacy with him, but he knew it also from the fact that his relative, having obtained, as was usual with young men belonging to families having church preferments, two livings—one of between 400*l.* and 500*l.* a year, and the other 1,200*l.*—and finding, after some years' experience, that he could not perform the duties of both, he surrendered the living of 1,200*l.* in order that he might devote his time and attention exclusively to the other. He therefore trusted, in proposing a clause, to enable the Crown to retain the power it had hitherto held respecting deaneries and prebends that should fall vacant, that neither his relative, Lord Wriothesley Russell, nor himself, would be subject to any imputation for the part they had taken in reference to this matter.

Mr. *V. Harcourt* was of opinion, that the noble Lord in proposing this clause, would meet the wishes of all persons interested in the subject, as it had been found, that the dean of Exeter was also prebendary of Exeter—a circumstance which had escaped the notice of the Ecclesiastical Commissioners. He was not personally acquainted with Lord Wriothesley Russell, but the feeling which had been just evinced by the House clearly proved, that his general reputation, as glanced at by the noble Lord, was fully borne out, and that there was no person better qualified to fill the deanery of Exeter. He felt, that the clause, even if it had an *ex post facto* tendency, was so much in consonance with the intention of the Ecclesiastical Commissioners, that if the noble Lord had any delicacy of moving it in that shape, in consequence of his relationship with Lord W. Russell, he (Mr. Harcourt) would willingly undertake to do so.

Lord *Ashley* bore testimony to the excellent character, exemplary conduct, and high professional attainments of Lord Wriothesley Russell.

The House went into Committee, the clause proposed by the noble Lord was added to the bill, and the House resumed.

MARINES' GREAT-COATS.] On the Order of the Day for the House to go into a Committee of Supply,

Captain *Boldero* rose to move an address for a copy of the order issued to the marines, obliging them to provide their own great-coats. The Admiralty, he contended, had no right to sanction the deduction of a sum out of the pay of the marines for that purpose. There was a regulation made which bore date the 20th of September, 1819, which had reference to the proper and sufficient clothing of the marines while doing duty on shore. According to this regulation, as he apprehended, they were entitled to great coats, at all events, while on shore. He had no access to official documents, but had merely been supplied with information through private sources, he conceived, however, that even upon the grounds which he could lay before the House, such a case could be made out as fully to justify and require its interference. It was perfectly true, that according to one of the regulations, a copy of which he held in his hand, a commanding officer was authorized to cause recruits to be furnished with knapsacks and great-coats at the expense of the Government and the reason of that regulation was this, that young men joining the marines frequently manifested a disposition to mutiny when they were at their very entrance into the service subjected to such heavy stoppages as the additional charges for the great coats occasioned; it was, therefore, found expedient to remit this regulation in the case of the recruits and confine it to the old soldiers. By an order dated the 15th of August, 1805, the officer commanding was authorized to order watch coats for marines serving on shore, to cause proper care to be taken of them, and to see, that they were carefully reserved for future occasions; thus, half at least of the men were under the two orders to which he had referred, entitled to great-coats, and all the recruits were entitled to them, so that it would require but very little additional expense to put the remaining portion of the marines upon the same footing as the soldiers of the line. He would suppose a possible case, that of marines directed to advance upon a military position, encumbered with knapsacks and great-coats. The officers commanding would at once desire them to fling them away; suppose the coats were lost, would it be contended, that the prices of these coats ought to be stopped from the poor men? Then why persevere in the present absurd and obnoxious practice? Why should they be worse treated on foreign service than at home, or at sea than on shore? The evil of which he complained could be remedied at an expense probably not exceeding 5,000*l.* or 6,000*l*, a year. He admitted, that the obnoxious practice had not arisen during the administration of the present Board of Admiralty, but that circumstance by no means lessened the obligation under which they lay to remove it; he entreated the House to recollect whose cause he was pleading; it was that of men who had never flinched from the performance of their duty in times of the greatest danger. They were men on whom devolved the painful duty of turning their arms against their own fellow-countrymen, whenever it became necessary to repress mutiny; from that danger they had never flinched, and yet, in many respects, they were worse off than the seamen. He could confidently say, that no men could have discharged their many and arduous duties more zealously or more efficiently than had the British marines at all times, and under all circumstances, and he, therefore, with confidence left their case in the hands of the House. He concluded by moving an address.

Mr. *C. Wood* observed, that the hon. and gallant Member had given a very good reason for not complying with his own motion. He alleged, that the Admiralty had no authority for refusing the great coats; if so, how could they produce the order for which he moved. He did not expect, that the motion of the hon. and gallant Member would come on that evening, and he, therefore, could not say, that he was prepared to enter into the question at any length; but probably his hon. Friend near him would favour the House with his views of the question then under consideration. He should only observe, that it had been the invariable practice for marines to find their own great-coats, and the instances which the hon. and gallant Member opposite gave, were exceptions which only proved the rule. The establishment of perfect uniformity throughout every department of the public service would be almost impracticable and if practicable, would be unjust. Marines were for the most part employed at sea, and if uniformity were valued so highly, it should be recollected, that the seamen were not provided by the Government with great-coats.

Sir *T. Troubridge* stated the practice to be, that one coat was provided for the recruits upon entering the service, and for this reason, that they could not have any arrear of pay coming to them to meet such extra expense, It was a mistake, however, to suppose that the marines paid full value for their coats; on the contrary, they were furnished with them at a very reduced price. The complaint then made to the House was one which appeared to him to be perfectly new; he had never heard of anything of the sort before that evening. There could be no doubt, if the marines were asked whether they would rather pay for their coats or receive them without payment, that they would prefer the latter; but he professed himself unable to discover any real grievance in the case before the House. If there were any grievance, and that it underwent proper examination by the competent authorities, and was investigated regularly through the several departments. there could be nothing more agreeable to the Government, nothing in which they could feel a greater interest, than redressing such a grievance. It was, however, always the practice of Government to wait till complaints came from the proper quarters, and if those complaints were well founded, the Government had the greatest possible interest in removing their cause.

Mr. *Hume* wished, that there should be no distinction between the marines and the seamen on the one hand, and the infantry on the other.

Viscount *Howick* said, that in his opinion, the marines were in a situation superior to that in which the infantry were placed; the marines paid nothing for their rations when at sea, while the infantry generally paid. This question appeared to him one with which the House ought not to deal rashly or without full and minute examination, and he hoped, that the application then made would be refused. If there were any species of application worse than another, when addressed to that House, it was an application on behalf of a body of armed men. If the House once began to listen to such applications, it would be regarded as an encouragement, and he did not hesitate to say, that it would be fraught with great danger to the safety of the country. These were matters which ought to be left in the hands of the executive; he even considered, that the mere discussion of them in a popular assembly was not unattended with the possibility of dangerous results.

Sir *H. Hardinge*, had always expressed the strong objection which he felt to discussions of that kind in the House of Commons. The army and the navy ought to look up to the Crown, and the Crown only—by no means to the House of Commons. The military force of the country should be the army of the Crown, and not the army of the Parliament. At the same time he must observe, that his hon. and gallant Friend, the Member for Chippenham, did no more in principle than had previously been done by the noble Lord the Member for Sussex. He should have voted against that motion had he been in the House as he should vote against the present motion, for he thought they were alike in principle, and both objectionable. With regard to this particular question, his opinion was, that wherever, as at the present moment in Spain, a battalion of marines, acting as soldiers on shore, performed the same services as infantry, the Government, as an act of justice, should supply without charge great-coats to the marine force as well as to the infantry. He hoped the Admiralty would hold out a promise liberally to consider the whole matter, and upon that understanding he would urge his hon. Friend the Member for Chippenham to withdraw his motion.

Mr. *C. Wood* protested against being considered as admitting this complaint to originate in any grievance. At the same time, if it did, he was sure the Admiralty would be ready fully to inquire into it.

Sir *C. Adam* did not think that a *primâ facie* case for inquiry had been made out; but if any grievances were proved, it would undoubtedly be fit that a remedy should be applied.

Mr. *Wakley* could not but admire the delicacy with which the noble Lord (Howick), the hon. Secretary for the Admiralty, and the hon. and gallant Officer opposite, contrived to dispose of this question. The army, said they, belonged to the Crown, and to the Crown must they look in all matters of this kind. But suppose the Crown acted unjustly and tyrannically, what then? There would be inquiry, perhaps, but no redress. He had frequently heard complaints made in that House, and substantiated, of the injustice which had been perpetrated both with respect to officers of the army and navy, but in no case had the grievance been redressed. He lamented to see the "ins" and "outs" hold together on such occasions, because they felt their own authority was impeached, and the manner in which they performed their executive functions. The noble Lord (Howick) was just going out of office, and the gallant Officer was about to succeed him ["No, no," and a laugh]; that was apparently the case, and for himself he wished to see frequent changes in the Government; it was his wish to keep the two factions constantly before the eyes of the people; the deeds of the Tories seemed to be a blank in the eyes of Englishmen at present; but they knew something of the Whigs, and there was a general outcry against them from one end of the country to the other. [Loud laughter.] With the mere exception of the palace, he really did not know where a single Whig could be found. He hoped the gallant Officer who introduced this question would divide the House upon it, unless the Admiralty gave a distinct pledge fully to inquire into the ground of complaint.

Motion withdrawn.

Question again put that the Speaker leave the Chair.

RUSSIA—MANNING THE NAVY.] Mr. *T. Attwood* rose to move an address to her Majesty upon a subject which involved most intimately the safety and honour of the country. The other night he had the pain to hear all the dreadful anticipations he had formed fully confirmed. The hon. Secretary for the Admiralty had acknowledged that we were not in a condition to repel the Russians at sea, if they should think proper to attack us. The hon. Gentleman acknowledged that the Russians might do us much injury on the English coast. He believed the Russians might attack England next July if they pleased, and with much greater injury than the hon. Secretary for the Admiralty would allow. He would proceed at once to state the grounds of the fears he entertained, and the extent of the injury which he apprehended. It was acknowledged on all hands that the Russians had twenty-eight line-of-battle ships at Cronstadt, well-manned, well-equipped, and in all respects well-appointed. The gallant admiral commanding at Portsmouth, no doubt, had told them that when the Russian navy joined Lord Duncan before the battle of Camperdown, they were found totally inefficient. The gallant admiral had also told the House that the Russian fleet, when it was sold to Portugal, was found on passing the Bay of Biscay to be totally inefficient, and was in consequence obliged to be broken up. The times had, however, changed since then, and no one, he thought, would be found at present hardy enough to give a similar account of a Russian fleet now. Every naval officer with whom he had conversed now said, that a Russian fleet would prove no despicable enemy. The Russians had now a fleet of twenty-eight sail of the line in Cronstadt. Our Ambassador, the Earl of Durham, had sailed with that fleet, as had also Commander Craufurd, who had given an account of its state of preparation, for which the country could never be sufficiently grateful. The year before last the Emperor of Russia had brought the whole of those twenty-eight sail of the line together at Cronstadt, and had taken them out to sea to manœuvre in one fleet. Last year he would not bring them together in one fleet to insult England; he and his councillors were too wise for that; for the proceedings of the House of Commons in the mean time had struck fear into their hearts. But the twenty-eight sail of the line were still at Cronstadt, and all last year 80,000 Russian soldiers wereon the coast of Poland. "I put it to the Whigs," said Mr. Attwood, "for I think little of them. I put it to the Tories, and I think little of them too. I put it to the Radicals in this House—and of all the three factions I think them the worst—I put it to them all three, and, though bad is the best, I think the Tories the least wicked of all. —yes, I fear that Whigs, and Tories, and Radicals, have entered into a compact, a treasonable compact, to introduce Russian soldiers into this country to humble us poor Radicals out of doors. This appears to be a wild supposition—and the days are wild in which we live—and we see wild circumstances arise every minute—and when I know the miseries of the people of England, their grievances, and their thorough discontent, and when I know that Whigs and Radicals have year after year turned a deaf ear to the sounds of calamity and woe, I may be allowed to imagine that there is such a thing as treason in this House. I'll not say that it is so, but I must be permitted to imagine that it may be so. Either treason or imbecility it is. I have no suspicion of the integrity of my hon. Friend below me, the Member for the Admiralty. I forget the place for which he is a Member ["Halifax"] but I have a strong suspicion of his want of knowledge. I will not say that we should have been a bit better under Tories, because I recollect their doings in 1827, in 1828, and in 1829, and then we were no better off than we are now. I could enter into a statement of the degradation inflicted by them upon the country, which would make every honest man in the House blush, if they would only believe me, or if they would only refer to the documents in the library, in case they won't believe me. Yes, the Tories began the career of their country's shame. The Whigs, under Earl Grey, carried it out in Poland, and the Whigs, under Viscount Melbourne, are now carrying it out in every part of the world. The right hon. Baronet knows this well, nobody better; for in 1827 the Russians made a treaty with him called the 6th of July. [Sir *R. Peel*—" I was not then in office."] True, you were not in office then, but you were six months afterwards. That treaty of the 6th of July, established the principle, that Russia was not to make war upon Turkey, except with the consent of England. The gallant Admiral near me (Sir E. Codrington) had in the discharge of his duty to exercise a great judgment on the Turkish fleet. He had then in his pocket orders from George Canning to enter the Black Sea, and to protect Turkey from the designs of Russia. [Sir *E. Codrington*— "No, no."] I must request the gallant Admiral not to contradict me now. He can answer me when I sit down. I hope he will let me explain. I say, that after the battle of Navarino, when the Turkish fleet was destroyed by an untoward event, the gallant Admiral had orders to enter the Black Sea and protect Turkey from Russia. ["No, no," from Sir *E. Codrington.*] I assert further, that whilst the gallant Admiral was repairing his fleet, after the battle of Navarino, George Canning, by an unhappy fate, died. The Duke of Wellington and Sir R. Peel then succeeded to the Government, and Sir Pulteney Malcolm was sent out to take the command of our fleet in the Mediterranean, with orders not to enter into the Black Sea? What was the consequence? The Emperor of Russia violated his compact with us, and ordered his troops to cross the Pruth. The Earl of Aberdeen, who was then a member of the Duke of Wellington's Government, remonstrated with the Russian Cabinet, and asked them why they had gone to war with Turkey? There was then an apology made to us. The Russian Cabinet said, "it was a private quarrel of their own," and promised that they would confine the war to the Black Sea. Then the right hon. Baronet, to his immortal shame, and the Duke of Wellington, for whose services no man feels deeper gratitude than I do, became associated with this degradation of their country. Yes; they were at the head of affairs in 1827, when the Russian troops passed the Pruth, in defiance of England. It was true that they remonstrated with Count Nesselrode, but what did he say to them? "Be content, we have a private quarrel with Turkey, and we must be the arbiters of our own honour." Then it was that the right hon. Baronet and the Duke of Wellington pocketed an insult to England such as England had never pocketed before. Count Diebitsch, the passer of the Balkan, should never have passed the Balkan. A Russian fleet then came out from the Baltic. I believe that there was not a man either in this House or in the other House of Parliament, which equally misgoverns England, that did not expect that that fleet would have been introduced on its passage into an English port. That, however, did not happen; but that fleet passed by us with contempt and insolence, and almost sweeping the Channel with a broom, as Van Tromp did in the time of Charles 2nd. It passed through the straits of Gibraltar into the Mediterranean, and then proceeded to blockade the Dardanelles. The Earl of Aberdeen proceeded to remonstrate again, and what said the Russian Ministers?

> "We have a question affecting our honour to settle. It is true we have made a compact with you not to carry the war into the Mediterranean; but Russia is the guardian of her own honour. If a Russian ship is attacked by a Turkish ship, you cannot deny to Russia the right of acting in her own defence. We find the Pasha of Egypt is coming up with his fleet to assist the Sultan of Turkey, and we must be prepared to meet him; but to show you that we mean no insult to your great country, we give you a pledge that every English ship which is cleared out for Constantinople before the 28th of October, 1828, shall be allowed to enter the Dardanelles."

Is there any man who can refrain from blushing when he hears of such language being addressed to his country? The right hon. Baronet,—I wish he would lift up his head and let me see his face. [The *Speaker*, "Order, order."] The right hon. Baronet must listen awhile to what I am about to say. The right hon. Baronet consented to submit to a burning insult, which must cause every Englishman to blush with shame. Yes, we were insulted by Russia, and basely submitted to the insult. This career the Tories began. Then we came to the treaty of Unkiar 'Skelessi. We saw the Russians, when the Turkish fleet was destroyed at Navarino, enabled thereby to move their artillery by sea and take Varna, and advance upon Adrianople. They never could have passed the Balkan, if the Turkish fleet had not been destroyed at Navarino. The hon. Member proceeded to contend, that if under such circumstances the Sultan had asked for the loan of an English fleet, whilst he was engaged in repairing that fleet which England had destroyed by "an untoward event," he would have been perfectly justified in making that demand. Without it he was too weak to resist; and the consequence was, that the Russians advanced on Adrianople. They made a treaty there. The Tories were then in power. That treaty gave to Russia the delta of the Danube, the district of Circassia, and the sovereignty of Abasia. Russia was under contract to England that she would take nothing from Turkey at the close of the war, and yet she took the gifts which he had just mentioned. She took the delta of the Danube to which she had no more right than England herself. She took the district of Circassia which Russia had no more right to take than Turkey had to give, for Turkey exercised no dominion there. Thank God, and the exertions of the brave Circassians, she had not yet got possession of the latter gift. Next to the Dardanelles, Circassia was the most important military point in Europe, and the Tories made us submit to the deep and burning degradation of acquiescing in the gift of it to Russia. But there came a deeper and more burning degradation still —the treaty of Unkiar 'Skelessi. Of all the treaties which ever disgraced the diplomacy of England, that was the most burning and damning. We suffered the Dardanelles, which had been an object of ambition to the ancient Romans, and the possession of which had now, for two centuries, been sought by the Russians—we had suffered that glorious military position to be placed in the power of the Russians without even a word on our part. It was true, that they had not yet obtained possession of it, but they soon would if that House did not awaken from its slumber. The Russians had now twenty-eight sail of the line at Cronstadt, and twelve sail of the line at Sebastopol. He would not at present enter into the question whether the fleet at Cronstadt would sail to attack our shores, though he thought it would not, for reasons which he should state hereafter to the House; but he would ask any hon. Member then present, what there was to hinder that fleet from passing the Sound, from traversing the Channel, from entering the Mediterranean through the Straits of Gibraltar, and from presenting itself at any moment at the Dardanelles. When it arrived there, it would find eleven English ships of the line on the station. Would any man in that House expect the captains of those eleven English ships to sacrifice their vessels in a contest against twenty-eight Russians? If there was such a man in the House he blushed for him. He knew that our ships and their commanders would perform their duty nobly under any circumstances, but ought we to expose them to so fearful a collision? It was well known that the Bosphorus was not fortified. The Russian fleet might therefore attack Constantinople when it pleased; eleven English ships of the line might frighten them from attacking it at present, but let twenty-eight Russian ships-of-the-line once come from the Baltic, and form a junction with twelve others from Sebastopol, and what motive would the Emperor of Russia have to prevent him from gratifying the ambition of 200 years, by taking possession of Constantinople and the Dardanelles? He said, that if this country only remained quiet, Russia would take possession of them both by next July. It was true that we might retake both, but at what a sacrifice of blood and treasure! It would require an army of 50,000 men, and a fleet of thirty sail of the line. He was afraid that the political economists with Mr. Hume at their head would oppose such a proceeding on the score of expense. But would he (Mr. Attwood) recommend it? Yes, he would, and the time would come when England would command it. Those who measured honour by the ell, and prowess by the pound, and whose souls were rapt up in pounds, shillings, and pence, might call this advice romantic. But such was not the light in which the great statesmen of the better days of England would have considered it. Would the great Chatham, that *clarum et venerabile nomen*, who said that he would stake the whole empire in the contest, rather than suffer Russia to get possession of a single village on the Black Sea, have submitted to the arrogant menaces of the Czar? Here was Russia insulting us in every way; they had got Odessa to the north of the Danube, they had got the sea of Azoph, they had got the mouths of the Danube itself, they had attempted Circassia, and almost taken Trebisond; next month they might have Constantinople, and the Black Sea would be a Russian lake as completely as the Thames an English river. Were we to stand still and see all this going on without making a single effort to prevent this fatal accomplishment of the destinies of England? We ought to be awake, and awake in time. We ought not to quarrel about Tories, Whigs, and Radicals, as the Greeks of Constantinople, when the Turks were thundering at the gates, disputed abou grace and free will; we ought to forget every low squabble about Churchmen, Catholics, and Dissenters; all were in danger, and the common interest of all required common exertion; every unworthy feeling ought to be discarded, and a determined effort made to protect the safety and honour of the country. He thought he had now traced the misdeeds of the Tories well enough, and shown that he was no friend of theirs, although by no means a friend of their opponents; he had proved that they had neglected a great duty in making no provision for the security of England. Now he came to the Whigs, and would show that the aggressions of Russia were still going on. The Tories had borne the aggressions of Russia on Poland. They stood by and saw them without remonstrance; or if they did remonstrate, they remonstrated as a coward always remonstrated — in a meek and dainty fashion. They did not hold a sword in one hand and a cannon ball in the other, but uttered a kind of humble and deferential remonstrance. He knew that there had been communications made by the various Governments from 1815 to 1830, but every one knew, that during that time the constitution of Poland was violated by the Emperor of Russia. All the institutions guaranteed to it by treaty had been smashed and annihilated. In 1830 and 1831 the Whigs were in power. He was quite sure the Whigs could have saved Poland by merely lifting up their finger, if they had pleased. He saw the hon. and gallant Admiral near him at Ramsgate in 1831, with his fleet, and thought it had been intended that the gallant Admiral should go up the Baltic. Every Englishman thought so too; and if the gallant Admiral had done so, not a gun would have been fired, or needed to have been fired, but Poland would have assuredly been saved. This was not done, and Poland was abandoned and betrayed —betrayed by England, and worse betrayed by France. That great and glorious nation was given over to the tender mercies of its cruel foes, the Emperor of Russia and his myrmidons, who had rebelled against its liberties and constitution. The Whigs abandoned the friends of liberty in Poland, and the French Government did the same. Louis Philippe said, they had received the most honourable assurances that the nationality of Poland would be protected. Louis Philippe and Earl Grey threw dust in the eyes of the unfortunate Poles; instead of giving them protection, they had given them treachery, and the consequence was, that the independence of Poland expired. But Poland was not dead; as her own children said of her, she but slept; and the right hon. Baronet opposite might be assured, that when the proper time arrived, when England awoke, Poland would also awake. The Whigs had betrayed England as well as Poland; the Vixen cried out against them on one side of the world, and the Express packet which had been attacked by the French, on the other side. There was no sound of English vengeance—no vindication of English honour by the Whigs. One would cost us four-farthings, the other three-farthings, and the Whigs at once said, "Let English honour go to the winds, and let us save our farthings." But this was not a doctrine which the people of England would endure; the Whigs had already covered themselves with greater contumely than the Tories, and their day was drawing to a close. The people of England would give back with heart and soul all that they had got from the Whigs, if they would only give back to the industrious classes the prosperity they had enjoyed during the war. But if prosperity at home was to be accompanied with shame abroad, the people of England never would be content, whether their rulers were Whigs, Radicals, or Tories. He had now detailed the difficulties and dangers of our position, our want of preparation, and the magnitude of the Russian preparation, but he had a word more to say. He might be told we had no right to interfere with the Russian fleet; that they had a perfect right to keep up as many ships of war as they pleased: no doubt; but he contended we had a right to ask them why they kept up so many ships in time of peace. If they told us they were going on an expedition against the Cham of Tartary, or a cruise throught the deserts of Siberia, or against Denmark or Sweden, or against ourselves, we had a right to say, "Dismantle your fleet instantly or we shall do something." The rights between man and man, in his view, were not more plain than those between nation and nation; we had a right to ask why a particular fleet was kept up, and if we could get no satisfactory answer, we had a right to take such measures as should seem required for the assertion of our rights and dignity. The Secretary for the Admiralty on a previous night, in a speech that was very clever, but rather *mal-à-propos* in its illustrations, had the honesty to admit that Russia might do us great injury. "But," said the hon. Gentleman, "so may any robber do to me when I go home, if he chooses to attack me." Now, he (Mr. Attwood) never carried pistols nor any such murderous weapons, and if such an accident as that supposed by the hon. Secretary were to cur to him, he should be rather puzzled; but if he saw some banditti watching him when he had 1,000 sovereigns about him and was carrying them with great anxiety, and if two or three were to approach him, presenting pistols to his breast without saying a word, he supposed he should understand what that meant; he supposed that was a case in point. If he saw these ruffians present their pistols, he supposed he should not stop to argue with them, but dash their pistols down and take his chance. The hon. Gentleman below him could not deny that the Russians had been levying black mail upon them for seven years or more. There was a little country called Circassia, and another called Turkey, where they had been making sad havoc with our interests. Circassia received no assistance from us, although we ought to defend her independence as a nation till the last gasp. The Turks had gone, the Danube was gone, the Poles had gone, and what was to go next? The Secretary of the Admiralty had talked of Malta the other night. He supposed some one would advise them to give it up to the Russians to quiet them. But if they did that, the Russians would soon drop a civil request for Gibraltar; and if that were granted, we should have them next at the Isle of Wight. The fact was, we must take up the bow, the spear, and the battle-axe, but God forbid we should have occasion to use them. Only put ourselves in fitting order, and then he was convinced the Russians would never dare to attack us; but remain unprotected, and he would be content that the truth he was now uttering should be taken for falsehood if we did not receive some burning insult from the Russians next summer. Next summer, if we remained as we were, a Russian fleet might enter the mouth of the Thames. They would, if they were wise, next July take possession of Sheerness; that would be a terrible affair; that would break the Bank of England in forty-eight hours; he begged the House would pay attention to this; he begged they would be prepared for the burning of Sheerness and the breaking of the Bank of England. They must stop payment in gold in forty-eight hours. Now, he would tell them what would prevent the Russians from taking Sheerness; for he rather thought hon. Gentlemen were not aware of it. He would tell them why the Russians would not take Portsmouth; although he was sure no noble Lord or right hon. Gentleman on the bench below would say that if the Russians chose to attack us in an unperceived manner next July they might not take Sheerness and Portsmouth by landing 30,000 men from their 28 line-of-battle ships. There were 40 sail of the line in Portsmouth harbour; he did not know how many at Sheerness; and both these places might be taken with great ease. If they chose to embark 50,000 men in line-of-battle-ships and transports, they might take London—an event unknown in the history of the country, for London had not been taken even by the Normans. But so miserable was our Government, so alarmed our people, and so weak our army and navy, that he had a perfect confidence that the Russians, if they pleased, next summer, might get possession of London, unless we made preparations to avert the danger. 50,000 Russians landed in the Thames might get possession of London in three days. The people had been insulted, deceived, and distressed for so many years, that he very much doubted whether they could be relied on in such an emergency. If 50,000 men landed, we could not bring 20,000 to oppose them. It would be a very easy thing for the Russians to do that, for he knew from credible authority, that last summer 80,000 men had been encamped on the shores of Courland, within a week's sail of England, and the Russians had been buying transports in this country within the last three months. They had been providing large steam-boats also lately. Did hon. Members suppose these transports were intended to convey troops to Kamtschatka or Columbia River? The Russians were no fools; the "cold shade of aristocracy," as Colonel Napier called it, did not paralyze them; their nobility possessed very little power; all the power they had was that of bowstringing the Emperor when they pleased. In Russia the army was despotic; their generals, and admirals, and diplomatists were selected from adventurers from all parts of the world; they were not great big Lords and dandies, like fat cows or fat bullocks, but able adventurers, such as Pozzo di Borgo, Capo d'Istrias, and Wittgenstein—the most intelligent men on the face of the earth. These men never slept, or, if they did sleep, they slept like the Bristol men, with one eye open; and they were watching an opportunity for a collision with our English aristocracy, whom they would deal with as a mere *bonne bouche.* But they would have to deal with the democracy besides, and that, he would tell them, would be like dealing with Æolus. When the Russians attacked England we should have a fearful vengeance, no doubt, a fearful reckoning, as the hon. Secretary for the Admiralty had said the other night; but, unhappily for us, if the country remained in its present state, it would not be executed upon the Russians, but upon the Ministers, and upon their friends and dependents. The very moment Chatham and Sheerness were burnt would be the signal for a revolution in England, and a far more fearful and terrible revolution than that of France in 1793; and a revolution in England would within one month produce a revolution in Europe. This was our protection: the Russians durst not attack us, lest the vengeance of the English people should fall upon them. A namesake of his hon. Friend near him, David Hume the historian, whose character had something of the prophet as well as the politician, seventy years ago foretold, in beautiful and interesting language, that the day was not distant when the government of England would come into the hands of men more interested in supporting the national debt than in maintaining the interests and honour of their country, and at that time, said Hume, the country will submit to all manner of insult and degradation; but it is probable that foreign nations will have regard to her former power and glory, and will be fearful of outraging the English people, lest that glorious people should rise up and execute vengeance upon their assailants; and therefore foreign nations will probably use measured insolence in their aggressions. Now, he could explain the prophecy of Hume; no doubt the Russians would use measured insolence. They would not take Sheerness, not because they could not; they would not take London, not because they could not; but because, if they did so, they would rouse the fury of the English people, the Ministers would be sacrificed, and a revolution of the most dreadful character would instantly burst upon Europe. Half a million of Russians might be landed, but they would be instantly swept into the German Ocean; they would be destroyed by the fury of the English people. Their fleet might escape, but it would be pursued into the Baltic; the ports of the Baltic would be seized, and the Russian Emperor would have a bowstring round his neck in six months. If any Gentleman would explain any weak point to which he (Mr. Attwood) had alluded, he would be much obliged to him. He believed in his conscience the Russians might attack us, and do us great injury with apparent impunity, but we should be avenged by a revolution in England, and that revolution would in one month be followed by a fiery revolution throughout Europe. As a friend of peace, of order, of humanity—as a friend of England, wishing to increase the happiness of its people, and to protect the little liberty they enjoyed, having no other object in all he had said or done in that House than to augment the comforts and prosperity, not of labourers and artisans only, but of masters and employers;—wishing to protect the three estates of the realm, Crown as well as Commons, and uphold that glorious constitution under which English freedom had flourished for 1,000 years, and wishing to see all classes of the community co-operating zealously and harmoniously for the national honour and defence, he was most anxious that Government should take steps to provide against the dangers that now menaced the empire. Considering the circumstances in which the country was at present placed, and having reference to the dangers which menaced our interests from the quarters he had mentioned, he warned the House to guard against those dangers; and to guard in due time and to effect that object, he moved that an humble Address be presented to Her Majesty, praying that she will be graciously pleased to adopt timely and efficient measures for obtaining a due supply of able seamen for the royal navy.

No hon. Member having seconded the Motion, it fell to the ground, and the House went into a Committee of

SUPPLY—NAVY ESTIMATES.] Mr. *C. Wood* moved that a sum of not less than £.113,924 be voted to Her Majesty for defraying the salaries of the officers and other expenses of the Admiralty-office.

Mr. *Hume* wished to put a question to the hon. Secretary to the Admiralty. If he were rightly informed by the public prints, the Hastings, of 74 guns, had some time back been appropriated to attend upon the Queen Dowager on her way to Malta; it had, as he understood, proceeded to Lisbon and to various ports of the Mediterranean, and was now about to return again in attendance on the Queen Dowager in her journey home. He understood there was beside a steamer at her Majesty's disposal. Now, considering that her Majesty, the Queen Dowager, enjoyed an income of 100,000*l.*, paid by the people of this country, he must object to sending 80-gun ships and steamers to attend upon an individual (no more could have been done in the case of her Majesty Queen Victoria herself), at a time when it was alleged that we were in want of ships to protect our commerce in different parts of the world. He wished to know on what principle the Board of Admiralty could defend the appropriation of a line-of-battle ship to such a purpose as this, and he wished to know whether the accounts he had seen were correct in stating that the Hastings was now coming home, after having attended the Queen Dowager.

Mr. *C. Wood* said the hon. Member was, to a considerable extent, misinformed in the statement he had made. It was perfectly true that the Hastings had carried her Majesty, Queen Adelaide, to Naples, and subsequently to Malta. Surely the hon. Member did not mean to object to a ship of war attending upon the Queen Dowager of England when she had occasion to go abroad. He could not believe it. However, the hon. Member was mistaken in thinking, as he seemed to do, that in sending out the Hastings they had a vessel the less for the defence of commerce; so far from that vessel not being made available as a ship of war, it had been employed since leaving England in several services, and services totally unconnected with the Queen Dowager. It would, however, return to this country with the Queen Dowager; and though during the period of the voyage, it of course could not be available to the public service, yet it would be immediately upon arriving in port here. The extent, therefore, of the withdrawal of the ship from the public service would be comprised in the periods of the passage out and the passage back. To this, he thought, no hon. Member could seriously object.

Mr. *Hume* said the hon. Gentleman was very much mistaken, for he did object to it altogether. In his opinion, there could not be a more improper misapplication on the part of the officers of the Admiralty of the power placed in their hands. He did think that it was a very serious matter, when they heard of the ships of war of the country being every where inadequate to protect its commerce. He objected to make the public pay another 100,000*l.*, or whatever the cost of sending this vessel might be, in addition to the large income already paid by the people to her Majesty Queen Adelaide. He wished to know, also, whether a steamer really did accompany her Majesty.

Sir *C. Adam* replied in the negative. The Hastings had been fitted to convey Lord Durham on a public mission, and the Queen Dowager went out in her, fitted as she was. Upon the Queen's arrival at Malta, the Hastings was employed in the public service, Sir Robert Stopford having sailed in her to Port Mahon, and to the coast of Spain. In fact, the Hastings had formed one of the squadron of ships which was intended to prevent the Russians from coming to burn Sheerness, as the hon. Member for Birmingham (Mr. T. Attwood) seemed to expect. As for the expense, surely if there was some expense, no man would say that such an illustrious and excellent person was not deserving of the expense. While on this subject, he might take the opportunity of stating, that the Queen Dowager had insisted that the country should not be put to one farthing's expense for the maintenance of her establishment while at Malta.

Captain *Pechell* said, if the hon. Member (Mr. Hume) knew the circumstances of the case, he would be the last man to object to a ship of war accompanying the Queen Dowager on a voyage for the recovery of her health. The state of the fittings of the Royal Yachts rendered them unsuitable for such a service. It was only in a ship of war that accommodations were to be found adapted to a person in her Majesty's delicate condition of health.

Sir *E. Codrington* did not think it reasonable to object to the appropriation of a ship of war to such a purpose, but he thought that when her Majesty, Queen Victoria signified her pleasure that a ship of the line should wait the orders of her royal Relative, it ought to have been commissioned for the purpose.

Sir *G. Clerk* said, the hon. Member for Kilkenny was, he believed, the only person in the country who would think of grudging the expense of a ship on such an occasion. With regard to another subject; the employment by the Board of Admiralty of certain line of battle ships of the third rate, and rating them as fourth rates—he begged to offer an observation or two to the House. He felt a very strong objection to the assumption by the Admiralty of the perfectly unconstitutional power, as he believed it to be, of altering in this manner the rates of pay, as fixed by the King in Council, of the officers and petty officers. He doubted whether, constitutionally, the Admiralty had any such power; and he also very much doubted whether the exercise of such power was not illegal; so that, if the officers chose to bring actions against the Admiralty, they would recover the difference of pay. The case of the Cornwallis was one in point; that vessel was a third rate, but was rated as a fourth, and the pay of the men and petty officers on board was altered accordingly. Since that, she had been again put on the rating of a third rate. He must say the practice was most inconvenient, and likely to create discontent in the navy. He should like to know whether the Admiralty had adopted this system on the authority of their legal advisers. There was certainly no power given the Admiralty by the last order in council on the subject, which would enable them arbitrarily to alter the rates of pay fixed by that. He was quite ready to admit, it might be very convenient for an Admiral going out to a hot climate, such as the West Indies, that his family should be accommodated in a roomy vessel, but such an arrangement ought not to be effected by the Admiralty at the expense of the officers and petty officers.

Mr. *C. Wood* said, the petty officers knew perfectly well at entering, what rating their ship was of, and, therefore, what pay they were entitled to receive. They had nothing to complain of. With respect to the concluding remarks of the hon. Baronet, he fully believed that the regulations of which he spoke gave the Admiralty full powers to make these alterations. So far, at least, it was clear that two successive boards of Admiralty had been of this opinion, and had acted upon it.

Sir *E. Codrington* said, that the same thing was done when the hon. Baronet (Sir G. Clerk) was at the Admiralty, and that the flag-ship at Portsmouth was rated in this way.

Sir *C. Adam* said, that with respect to the Cornwallis, if she had not gone, a fourth-rate must have gone, and the officers would not have been a bit better off. A principal reason for sending her out was, that in the then state of the West India islands, it was desirable to have a ship on the station capable of conveying a battalion at once from one island to the other. It was quite a mistake to suppose the officers had been unfairly dealt with; they had no less an amount of pay than they would have had in a fourth-rate.

Mr. *Hume* insisted that he had heard no reason assigned why the people should find a line-of-battle ship to convey the Queen Dowager abroad. He must also refer to the charges for the packet service, which were made out in various different items scattered over upwards of 50 pages of the estimates. The whole amount was 173,623*l.* He submitted, that the portion of this aggregate which related to the Post office charges should be so brought forward as that they might have a statement both of the receipts and of the expenditure of the Post-office before them at once. They would then be able to see what was the separate expense of the navy packet department. He wished to know whether the Admiralty intended to adopt his suggestion.

Mr. *C. Wood* said, the present was the first occasion on which the several items of the packet service had been given in the estimates in a distinct and separate shape. There could be no difficulty in giving the expense, but it must be broken up into details, which would be very unusual, and for which they were not prepared.

Mr. *Hume* said, in No. 3, page 11, of the estimates for the Admiralty there was an expense of 950*l.* for "controller of steam machinery and of the packet service," for salary and house rent. He wished to know what were the duties of that officer, and who that officer was?

Mr. *C. Wood.* Sir E. Parry.

Mr. *Hume.* Is he an engineer?

Mr. *C. Wood* replied he was not. Sir Edward Parry had the management of the whole of the packet service, including the repairs of the machinery; and visited the different stations when necessary. He had discharged the duties of his situation in a most efficient manner and without such assistance it would be impossible for the Board to fulfil the duties which devolved upon it.

Mr. *Hume* said, Sir Edward Parry was first appointed superintendent of packets, and then controller of steam machinery. He wished to know how it was possible that a captain in the navy could become fit to fill the situation of inspector and controller of steam-engines. In no other country, would they go to the army or navy for a man to fill such an appointment, but would appoint a man bred up to the profession: and, above all, no other country would give such a man a salary, more than was given to the best engineer that the country could afford. He thought, that a most distinguished engineer would have been selected; whereas, he appeared to be an officer of the Navy.

Vote agreed to.

The next vote proposed was 2,550*l.* for the office for the Registry of Merchant Seamen.

Captain *Pechell* begged to draw the

Secretary of the Admiralty's attention to a point which had been the subject of much complaint, namely, the stoppage of pensions for good conduct when the parties returned to active service.

Mr. *Charles Wood* said, that the practice was not a new one, nor confined to the Admiralty. On the contrary, it had been a principle acted upon for upwards of twenty years in all public offices, that no man should receive pension and pay at the same time. He was not prepared to introduce any measure to alter the rule in the present case. In his opinion, whatever objections might be urged against it, he thought that this rule had two good results of no slight importance. In the first place, it tended to keep up a reserve of seamen, upon which the service could draw in time of need; and, secondly, the existence of these pensioners served as an example and an inducement to other seamen to prefer the Queen's to the merchants' service. By a measure, however, which was passed a few years ago, it was provided that where pensioned seamen are called upon by proclamation to serve, they were to be allowed their pensions together with their pay.

Vote agreed to.

On the question that 468,059*l.* be granted for the wages of workmen, &c. in the dock-yards,

Mr. *Wolverly Attwood* rose to call the attention of the House to the present inadequate rate of wages allowed to shipwrights in her Majesty's dock-yards, which was inferior to that paid in merchants' yards, and, consequently, the best men would necessarily prefer the private to the public service. Now it was of the highest importance that the public should have the benefit of the most skilful men in this department; it was as essential that the shipwrights should be of the first class as that the materials should be of the best quality, and the ships constructed upon the most perfect plan. While the present disproportion existed between the rate of pay given by the Government and that afforded by private individuals they could not hope to have in the dock-yards the superior description of artisans. In her Majesty's dock-yards there were two classes of men—three out of fifteen were appointed to the first class, and received 4*s.* 6*d.* a-day, the remainder of the fifteen received 4*s.* a-day. The wages paid in merchants' yards on the River Thames was 6*s.* a-day, and in addition to that the shipwrights were allowed to take away chips, a privilege at one time enjoyed by the workmen in the Government yard, but which was discontinued, and a compensation of 6*d.* a-day granted. That compensation, however, was withdrawn, and the worst class of men in the merchants' yards earned as much as the first-class men in her Majesty's dock-yards. The shipwrights, also, had to purchase their own tools out of the wages they earned, while their pensions had been abolished. There was a difference of from thirty to fifty per cent. in favour of the private employment. The same class of workmen could earn in the merchants' yards, if in constant employment, 90*l.* per annum, 60*l.* per annum if they remained idle four months in the year, who in the dock-yards could only earn 60*l.* if they worked every day and every hour. No one who considered the principles by which workmen were commonly regulated could imagine that it was possible, while paying an inadequate rate of wages, to obtain the best class of workmen. And as to those shipwrights who were retained in the public service by the fear of forfeiting the pension, which was only to be acquired by a certain period of service, it was unjust towards them to oblige them to work at a scale of wages which afforded them no fair remuneration for their talents or their experience, and so much below what they could obtain in private dock-yards. He (Mr. *W. Attwood*) was prepared to state that numbers of skilful workmen had left the public dock-yards, in consequence of their being able to find more profitable employment elsewhere. In Chatham twenty men, of high character, had lately left her Majesty's dock-yard; several at Woolwich; and thirteen had left at Sheerness. And these men could not be replaced with men of equal skill and ability, without increasing the rate of wages. An interview had taken place between the men who had left Chatham dock-yard and the Captain-superintendant; and when they were asked their reasons for leaving the dock-yard, they stated that it was entirely owing to the inadequacy of the pay which they had received. To skilful workmen it was exceedingly disagreeable to be paid at a lower rate than the ordinary scale of wages; it placed them in an unfair position, and naturally indisposed them to exert themselves with that zeal which they would otherwise display. It was the interest of the country that the dock-yard men should be paid liberally, in order to secure for the public service, the best class of workmen. And if the shipwrights in the public dock-yards were paid at a lower rate than those employed in the private yards, the public service must necessarily be performed by an inferior class of workmen. In bringing this case forward, he (Mr. W. Attwood) did not wish to throw censure on any Government. He attacked the system; and whether it was a Whig Government or a Tory Government against the system were his remarks directed. He hoped the subject would receive the attention of the Admiralty; for one more important had never been brought forward among all the questions which had been discussed relative to the Navy.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* was not surprised that the hon. Member should have brought this subject forward. It had not escaped the attention of the Admiralty, by whom a representation had been made to the Treasury, which was still under consideration. Formerly there was a superannuated allowance not only for skilful workmen, but for ordinary labourers. That system was very properly altered. But it was another question, whether the superannuation allowance should be altogether done away with. It was a totally distinct and a very important question, whether it would not be proper to give a retired allowance to the skilled and experienced workmen, in order to secure a sufficient supply of such workmen in the public dock-yards. The Treasury were not indisposed to recommend that a just provision should be made as superannuation allowances, for those skilled and experienced workmen. It would be a very false economy if, by neglecting to make proper provision for such workmen, the public service should be deprived of their assistance. At the same time it should be recollected, that the benefit of the superannuation system was, that it would be an additional inducement to such workmen to remain in the public employment, and they could not expect the advantage both of increase derived from the fluctuations of wages in the private dock-yards, and the certainty of superannuated allowance. And it should also be considered, that men had many inducements to remain in the public dock-yards, from the credit which was naturally felt from employment in her Majesty's service, and he did not think there would be any difficulty hereafter in procuring able workmen for the public dock-yards.

Mr. *Barnard* was glad to hear, that a superannuated allowance would be granted to able workmen in the public dock-yards—but he did not think this alone would do. He entirely concurred in what had fallen from his hon. Friend. He considered that job work was the life and soul of every business; and he hoped, that system would be adopted in the public dock-yards.

Sir *E. Codrington* said, that the able statement of the hon. Member (Mr. Attwood) had saved him the trouble of making any lengthened speech. He might however, say, that when the dock-yard shipwrights were discontented with their remuneration, they were told by the Admiralty, they might leave if they liked, thus adding insult to injury. By the system of classification at present adopted—by lot—the apprentice was often put over his master. Was that a proper arrangement? He was happy to find, that the Chancellor of the Exchequer had intimated his willingness to do something towards removing that discontent which at present existed, and which would leave the dock-yards, perhaps, deserted just at the crisis when able workmen were most required.

Sir *G. Clerk* thought the House and the country were under great obligations to the hon. Member (Mr. W. Attwood) for bringing this subject before them; and it must be gratifying to find that measures were likely to be taken for removing the evils of the present system. He agreed with the hon. Member, that the pay of the shipwrights in the Government dock-yards was not sufficient to insure the services of the most efficient men. Shipwrights were a class of men requiring considerable instruction before they could perform their work well; and in proportion to the skill that was requisite, was the difficulty of obtaining men of that class. Nothing but high wages could secure their services. The work of a shipwright was of a very laborious description, and it was impossible to expect men working at inferior wages to exert themselves so much as they would, if they were paid in proportion to the labour they performed. The system of classification now adopted was most injudicious. At the time of the peace the workmen had the option of accepting reduced wages or going away, but owing to the depressed state of the merchant shipping, the greater part preferred remaining. The difference then was not so great between the merchants pay and the dock-yard pay as it was now. Formerly the shipwrights were allowed to retire on pensions; but this was no longer the case. Hence two causes were operating unfavourably, not only to the men themselves, but to the parishes in which the dock-yards were situated. He thought it worthy the consideration of the Government whether the system of allowing pensions should not be restored, as well as the pay of the shipwrights be increased. He should also recommend them to do away with the classification, and pay the men by the job.

Mr. *C. Wood* said, that no part of his duty since entering office had been more puzzling to him than that which referred to the payment of the workmen in the dock-yards. Previous to 1830, the work was done by task and job; but that system was totally set aside by the right hon. Baronet the Member for Pembroke, when First Lord of the Admiralty, who introduced day pay. At the same time it would be extremely unjust to Sir James Graham, if he did not state that the subject was pretty well considered at the time. Whether the information which the right hon. Baronet then received was correct or not as to the rate of wages paid to shipwrights in merchants' yards, he could not say. If the right hon. Baronet were present, he would, no doubt, have been able to satisfy the Committee upon that point. It appeared that he took the trouble to inquire of the principal shipbuilders in the River Thames, at Whitehaven, on the Tyne, and at Liverpool, and that he placed the daily wages of the men in the dock-yards at a rather higher rate than the average of the wages in all those places. One great difficulty attending the paying of all civil servants, unless they were paid by the job, was, that they must necessarily be paid in classes, and this was always to some extent a discouragement to the best workmen. But the Committee ought to bear in mind, that there were many privileges enjoyed by men working in the dock-yards which those working in private ship-yards did not enjoy. They had medical attendance when hurt, and half-pay during their cure besides superannuation allowances. In the year 1837, when this question was again brought under the consideration of the Admiralty, the same course was adopted as that which Sir James Graham pursued in 1830. The Admiralty made inquiry of the principal ship-builders in different parts of the country, and found then that the wages of the men were much about the same as what persons were earning in private dock-yards, with the addition of those privileges to which he had alluded. With regard to classification, and the statement made by his hon. and gallant Friend (Sir Edward Codrington), as to its partial working, he thought that was a fault of the mode in which the system was carried out, and not of the system itself. The system that a limited number of those who were presumed to be the best workmen in the yard should receive higher pay was not unjust. But the complaints which he had heard from the deputations that had come up from the different dock-yards, against the system of classification generally, resolved themselves into a complaint of the rates of wages. One workman had told him, that he hoped no alteration would be made in the system of paying by the day. With regard to the men working by the job; he should be unwilling to adopt that plan again unless they connected it with the system of unlimited earnings. Most undoubtedly that was the best system they could adopt for the benefit of the good workmen, and also for procuring the greatest amount of work. It had never been practised, however, in the dock-yards since the peace, and there was an objection to working everybody to the utmost of their strength in ordinary times, leaving no means of suddenly increasing the amount of work in case of emergency.

Colonel *Sibthorp* thought, that the country were much indebted to the hon. Member for Greenwich for bringing this matter forward, for it was only when these suggestions were made in the House, that the right hon. Gentleman opposite came down and said, "Oh, we intended to do all this." But if the suggestions had not been made, they would not have heard one word from her Majesty's Government that any alteration was contemplated, nor would any alteration be made. He thought, that the higher officers were too well paid for the services they performed;

for instance, there was his hon. Friend (Mr. C. Wood), a very clever man, he had no doubt, but what did he know of naval services? He (Colonel Sibthorp) had told him before, and he repeated it now, that he "would be sea-sick in a punt at Westminster-bridge," and with all his respect for the hon. Gentleman, he must declare, that he could know nothing about the matter.

Mr. *W. Attwood* was glad to hear from the Chancellor of the Exchequer, that the subject had been brought by the Admiralty under the consideration of the Treasury, and if he had been aware, that there had been any probability of a satisfactory answer being given to the application, he should have considered it inexpedient to bring the matter forward; he had only done it, however, after repeated applications, and after consultation with other Members connected with towns having dock-yards. He trusted, that the Chancellor of the Exchequer's liberality would induce him to do what was requisite to place the shipwrights in the dock-yards on a fair footing. But he must state, that a superannuation allowance alone would not be sufficient. It was necessary, that the pay also should be raised to at least 5*s*. a day, the pay in private yards being 6*s*., and the men being sometimes able to earn 7*s*. or 8*s*. a day. The present rate had been fixed at a time when the general scale of wages had been much reduced, and not as the fair average rate of a number of years. With reference to the remarks of the hon. Secretary of the Admiralty, he must state, that there was as much fluctuation in the public as in the private service, the men being sometimes employed six days and sometimes only five days in the week. A great injustice was inflicted by the present system on those shipwrights who, having a claim to pensions, were obliged to remain in the service at whatever rate of pay, in consequence of which, men not so fettered had left the service. Twenty men had left Chatham, thirteen had gone from Sheerness, and it was perfectly clear, that unless more adequate wages were given, none but inferior workmen could be expected to remain. The classification system operated most unfairly, only three men out of fifteen being put in the superior class. It was impossible too, to make any difference between the rate of wages of the same class of men; no difference could be made between workmen of the same class, except by the introduction of task work. The workmen would rather have lower general rates, than that three or four, who might be with difficulty selected, should receive a higher sum.

Mr. *T. B. Hobhouse* was unwilling to allow the subject to be dropped without expressing the pleasure he felt at its having been mooted by the hon. Member; there was not one Member for a town having a dock-yard, that did not, like himself, wish to see the workmen adequately remunerated.

Vote agreed to.

On the vote of 856,637*l*. for naval stores for the building, repair, and outfit of the fleet, &c., including the purchase of timber, stores, and all other materials; purchase or hire of ships and vessels; of steam machinery; and for freight and sundry expenses connected with naval stores being proposed.

Mr. *Hume* said, that great complaints had been made of the reduction in the quantity of stores, but if the reduction had been made at the proper time, at the end of the war, many millions of the public money would have been saved. He had some years ago disputed this point with Mr. Croker, and he had then stated, that 22,000,000*l*. had been spent in building ships, and that the average expenditure for stores was 2,000,000*l*. a-year; he now held in his hand a statement, that 39,469,000*l*., had been spent in stores, in building ships, and in wages between the years 1816 and 1838. He begged, therefore, that the Government would not be led away by the statement of the right hon. Member for Pembroke, that we ought to have eighty-four ships of the line, and, of course, other ships in proportion. They ought rather to consider how many they could man in case of emergency; whilst we did not want the same number of ships as all the world beside, we should well man those we had in commission. He believed that the navy would have plenty of good seamen, if they were paid as high wages in the public service as in other services. There was no doubt that the improvements in the navy which had taken place during the last twenty years, and the advantages now given to the sailors would command the best men if we were a little more liberal to them; but in order to do this hon. Members must look at the amount that was thrown away upon the officers. There were 5,000 officers from the rank of lieutenant to that of admiral, and during the time so many were receiving payment, not more than 700 were employed, so that for every officer employed there were six idle. Only let them see the amount of money thus taken, and how the navy was crippled to give promotion to officers, and satisfy the urgent demands of Members of Parliament. ["*No, no,*" and "*It is true.*"] He was glad to find that this was now admitted by naval officers, for when he had formerly asserted the same thing it had been denied. He told the Government, therefore, that no good would be done till they put an end to all promotions that were not really required and deserved. So far from there being any defect in the pay of the officers, they were paying five millions a-year, and yet they were told the other evening, that there were not officers enough to man five sail of the line. He recollected once when there was a committee up-stairs, a gallant Officer not now in his place, had said, "only think of Waterloo; we ought always be prepared for such a contest." He did not blame the gallant Officer for saying so, and doubtless, many naval Officers in the House would, in like manner, wish to keep up a large naval force, always ready to fight such a battle as that of Trafalgar; but he wished to draw their attention to the deliberate report of the Committee of 1817, which Lord Castlereagh had drawn up, and the report of 1828, on the naval estimates, in which it was laid down, that in a time of peace we ought to husband our resources, and that we were not again to anticipate such a war as that we had been lately engaged in. We ought to pay more attention to commerce; we ought to look upon other nations as our friends and not as enemies, and we ought to trust to the influence of friendly intercourse instead of acting as in times gone by, when popular songs and cries were freely circulated to rouse the feelings of the people, and to make them believe that all the nations were our enemies. He was sorry to find so many years' stores laid by, for there must be much loss from decay, and he could not account for any such sum as proposed for the purposes required. By a return he had formerly moved, it appeared that we had twenty years' store of gunpowder, we had also twenty years' supply of top-masts and spars, and he wanted to know what was the use of twenty years' supply of anything?

Mr. *C. Wood* said, that the principal reason of there being such a heavy stock of top-masts and spars on hand arose from the circumstance, that they were really using up the old stores, a great part of which had been in the yard for twenty years. These spars were useful for many purposes, and kept fresh for a great length of time; while it was difficult to get them of the best quality.

Mr. *Hume*, it would be much better to buy these spars as they were wanted.

Sir *E. Codrington* observed, that he recollected a ship coming out when he was on service in the Mediterranean, and on examining her condition he found it necessary to condemn the whole of her spars and rigging. But the real thing wanted was to get the best seamen: they could easily obtain ships and stores provided they could procure able-bodied seamen.

Vote agreed to.

On the motion being made, that a sum of 159,992*l.* be granted for new works and improvements and repairs in the yards,

Mr. *Hume* objected to the vote, and particularly to 25,000*l.* for a dock at the west end of the yard at Woolwich. He had ascertained, that a sum of four millions sterling had been applied under this branch of the estimates since the peace, and he was afraid, that many of the works now in progress, had been very inconsiderately commenced.

Sir *George Clerk* confessed, that he felt strong objection to vote such sums for new works at Woolwich. He observed, that the estimates for Woolwich exceeded 60,000*l.* He wished also to have an explanation of the vote for Portsmouth. There were two sums of 15,000*l.* and of 93,000*l.*, in all 108,000*l.*, under this branch; the latter sum being required to complete the works, although, only 15,000*l.* was asked for the service of the present year.

Mr. *C. Wood* replied, that with regard to Woolwich the great object which the Admiralty had in view was to form a yard there, for constructing steam engines for her Majesty's steam ships. The proximity of Woolwich to the best manufactories made it most desirable to form a concentrated establishment of that description, which would be found of great advantage to the public service. And in reference to the sums wanted for Portsmouth it would be seen, that the expense was chiefly required for repairing the sea wall. It would be a work of three or four years duration. The fact was, that the sea wall was going from one end to the other, having been built on mud without being piled. They would require, indeed, almost to rebuild the wall, and the cost of that, together with the construction of two new slips which were necessary, made the vote amount to the sum stated in the estimate, which would be expended in annual portions till the whole was completed.

Vote agreed to.

The next vote proposed, was 282,230*l.* for half-pay to officers of the navy and royal marines, in addition to 500,000*l.* voted previously for the same service.

Mr. *Hume* stated, that he had strong objections to the principle involved in this vote. By the system of promotion in the naval service, we had 5,000 officers on half-pay, while we never had more than 700 actually employed. He should wish to have a return of the number of officers on half-pay, with a statement also of their respective number of years' service, that they might see the extent to which they were burdened with continued annuities. He regretted much to see old officers of long service passed over, and young men put over their heads. He had very strong objections to the system of promotion, and had documents to show the injustice of it, but seeing the thin state of the House, and the apathy evinced by hon. Members, for there had not been forty Members present almost since they commenced to debate these estimates, he really had no encouragement to enter upon any detail of the subject. He would, therefore, content himself for the present by protesting against the system of promotion adopted by the Admiralty.

Sir *Edward Codrington*, on a former occasion, had taken occasion to contrast the remuneration paid to officers in the navy compared with those in the civil departments of the Government. When he looked at the question in that light it was not enough to say, that it was unjust to officers on half-pay, because it was not within the name of common justice. The officers on half-pay were most shamefully remunerated, for there was not one officer in any civil department of the State who did not receive double remuneration for half the same period of service. He did not allude to men who had not seen hard service, but he spoke of such men as Sir Samuel Hood, Admiral Keates, and others —men who had performed the most brilliant actions—who were never out of employment—who had been all their lives at sea, and whose services to their country never could be excelled. Either, then, it was not right to give so much remuneration to civilians, or more should be given to naval officers. He trusted that the commission now sitting on both services would not overlook this hardship, and that something would be done by the commissioners. With respect to the system of promotion in the navy, he thought it most objectionable. It was all in the hands of the First Lord of the Admiralty, who did as he thought fit, and who made it a matter of Parliamentary interest. What did the First Lord know of the merits of officers in the service? It was all managed by him as a matter of patronage. He had heard it said, that this was unavoidable, otherwise they would not get fit persons to make the sacrifices necessary in accepting such a situation. He did not understand what sacrifice was involved in the question at all, seeing that the First Lord was entitled to a pension of 2,000*l.* a year after two years' service. He felt called upon to enter his general protest against so objectionable a system of dispensing promotion to officers in the navy.

Captain *Pechell* complained that there was no half-pay to midshipmen. That numerous and most meritorious, but ill requited class of officers, placed a firm reliance in the proceedings of the military commission, to whom reference had been already made. He trusted that the hon. Member, the Secretary for the Admiralty, would give some assistance in the matter, and he begged to know whether Government would do anything for them?

Mr. *C. Wood* said, that he had no knowledge whatever of the proceedings of the commission to which the gallant Officer had alluded, and he thought it would be better to postpone saying anything further until the report of the Committee was on the Table of the House. As regarded the complaints which had been made by hon. Members at the manner in which promotions had taken place in the navy, he thought that there was no good reason for the remarks which had been made. The noble Lord at the head of the Admiralty had paid his utmost attention to investigate the claims and merits of officers, and he held in his hand a return of the number of lieutenants who had been promoted for the last nine years, arranged in two classes —the first being those who had been promoted for services, and the other consisting of those who had been promoted for any other cause. Now, the proportions which the first class bore to the second class was as follows:—For the year 1830, one-third; 1831, one-half; 1832, one-quarter; 1833, one-third; 1834, one-half; 1835, two-thirds; 1836, one-half; 1837, one-half and more; 1838, two-thirds.

Sir *E. Codrington* said, that the hon. Secretary for the Admiralty had shown, that the First Lord of the Admiralty exercised an enormous amount of official and irresponsible patronage.

Sir *C. Adams* replied, that his noble Friend at the head of the Admiralty made it an uniform rule to consult the other Lords at the Board of Admiralty, and they gave him their best advice. His noble Friend spared no pains or trouble in the investigation of the claims of officers, and was solely influenced by the consideration of their merits. He would not say, that his noble Friend never promoted a friend—that would be absurd; and no one could expect that any person holding the appointment of his noble Friend would not occasionally serve a Friend. But this he would say at the same time, that there never was a man filling that high office who took more pains to make himself acquainted with the claims of officers, and to make merit the rule of his official conduct.

Sir *Edward Codrington* repeated his objections to the system of promotion in the navy; and as an instance of its unfairness, mentioned, that the First Lord had promoted the three sons of a captain now living, passing over the son of Captain Bathurst; and there was the son, also, of Admiral Brown, who had been a lieutenant now for ten or eleven years.

Mr. *Hume* observed, that the doctrine stated by the gallant Admiral was most startling. He thought, that the noble Lord, the Earl of Minto, held the high office of First Lord of the Admiralty to serve his country, but it seemed from what the gallant Admiral had said, that he held it only to serve his friends.—[Admiral *Adams* had stated nothing of the kind.] He certainly understood the gallant Admiral to have admitted that the noble Earl at the head of the Admiralty did occasionally use his official patronage to serve a friend. Had it been a case of two men of equal claims in which the noble Lord was represented to have given the preference to one of them as a private friend, he would not have thought so much of it, but the gallant Admiral did not make that statement. The Queen of England could not burden the country with a pension of 50*l.* without the approval of that House. But the First Lord of the Admiralty was under no such limitation. There were 4,000 officers on half-pay, and not one of them ought to be promoted except for good services. The system avowed by the gallant Admiral was fixing a heavy burden on the country. A public man who avowed that he served his friends did not serve his country.

Sir *Charles Adams* remarked that the hon. Member for Kilkenny had not attended to what he had said. He had not stated that his noble Friend had ever officially served a friend. What he did say was, that his noble Friend had occasionally promoted a friend, and he defied any one to point out an instance where the officer promoted did not deserve it.

Mr. *Charles Wood* said, that the document which he had read, was the best answer to the charge that the noble Lord had bestowed his official patronage in any other way than from a just consideration of the merits of officers.

Sir *Edward Codrington* had on a previous occasion alluded to the hard case of the lieutenants. There were 300 lieutenants at the head of the list who were entitled to 7*s.* a day, but they had not received that allowance, although entitled to it. He wished, therefore, to see the Order in Council on the subject, and meant to ask for that document.

Mr. *C. Wood* said that, with reference to the lieutenants who had been taken from the top of the list and placed on the list of commanders, they were perfectly aware of the effect of the arrangement, and they were offered that rank if they chose to accept it at the same pay.

Vote agreed to.

On the motion that 12,540*l.* be granted for military pensions and allowances.

Mr. *C. Wood* said, in answer to a question from Capt. Pechell, that he had stated a few evenings ago that he believed a pension was vacant. On inquiry he found that that was the case, and that the Board of Admiralty had met that morning and had conferred it on Captain Napier.

Sir *E. Codrington* referred to the difference in the allowance to the lieutenant-governors of Greenwich and Chelsea hospitals. Both of the officers that held those appointments were very distinguished for their services; the lieutenant-governor of the former was Admiral Sir Jahleel Brenton, and of the latter was General Sir G. Walker. The advantages that the latter enjoyed over the former, however, were very considerable. Sir G. Walker was colonel of the 57th. regiment, and received emoluments from that and other sources; whereas Sir Jahleel Brenton was not allowed to receive his half-pay while he held the appointment. The duties of Greenwich also were much more onerous than those at Chelsea. For instance, the number of pensioners at Greenwich was 2,710, while only 500 resided at Chelsea. He understood that when Sir Jahleel Brenton accepted the appointment, he consented to give up his half-pay as rear-admiral; he, therefore, did not complain of this individual case, but he protested against such a difference in the system with respect to the two establishments. In almost every respect the advantage that military men enjoyed over naval officers was very great. He contended that there should be as nearly as possible an equality.

Vote agreed to.

On the vote for 150,954*l.* for the freight of ships for the conveyance of troops, &c., for the army and navy departments,

Alderman *Thompson* complained of the expense of fitting out old men-of-war as transports or troop ships. The expense was infinitely greater than that of hiring ships from private persons.

Mr. *Wood* said, that the subject had already received his attention, but that while the expense incurred on behalf of the public was considered, the health of the troops must also be remembered. The existing regulation was matter of economy in fact, for if a transport were employed the troops would be subjected to inconvenience and want of comfort; whereas when a troop ship was used they would be landed in good health, which was of the highest importance. A saving of time, and consequently of expense, was also effected; and while transports would not be entirely given up, it was thought exceedingly advisable that troop ships should be generally introduced.

Vote agreed to and the House resumed.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Tuesday, March 26, 1839.

Minutes.] Petitions presented. By the Duke of Buckingham, from Anglesey, and Sligo, for recalling Lord Fortescue from Ireland; from two places, against any Alteration in the Corn-laws.—By the Earl of Bandon, from Bampton, and Lord Redesdale, from Herefordshire, to the same effect.—By the Duke of Buckingham, from two places, against parts of the Beer-laws; from Herefordshire, against the proposed system of National Education; from Great Yarmouth, for Inquiry into Maynooth College.—By the Archbishop of York, from some place, against any further Grant to Maynooth College; from the Temperance Society of York, against selling Beer or Spirits on the Lord's Day.—By the Earl of Mansfield, from Dumfries, and other places, for Church Extension in Ireland.—By Lord Wharncliffe, from Luton, and another place, for Amending the Poor-law Act; from York, for Inquiry into the State of the Church in Canada; from several places for a Uniform Penny Postage.—By Lord Brougham, from Glasgow, in favour of Mr. Rowland Hill's plan of a Penny Postage.

Canadian Prisoners.] Lord *Brougham* wished to know from the noble Marquess whether he had any objection to produce those papers which he (Lord Brougham) gave notice last night that he should move for this evening—namely "for a return of the names of persons tried for political offences in Canada since the 1st of October, 1837, with the result of the trials and of the sentences?"

The Marquess of *Normanby* had no objection to produce such a return,

Lord *Brougham* said that, in alluding to another class of persons, who had been condemned in Canada and sentenced to transportation, he did not wish to press the subject on their Lordships, or to raise any discussion, farther than earnestly to call the attention of Government to the situation of those prisoners. In consequence of what had passed last night, an individual had called on him and stated how deplorably these prisoners were situated. Some of them were men who had held a respectable situation in society, and were well educated; others of them had moved in a less respectable sphere of life; but they were all of them, though political offenders, thrust into convict ships, amongst thieves, swindlers, and bad characters of every possible description. He did hope that this matter would be seriously considered, and that a proper distinction and classification would be made. He believed that to cause such a consideration of the case he had nothing to do but to call the attention of the noble Marquess to it. The noble Marquess, no doubt, had nothing to do with the matter in the first instance; for he supposed things with respect to those prisoners had only taken their ordinary course. He was, however, of opinion, that the subject was one that required consideration. The noble and learned Lord said, he should take that opportunity to express a fervent and earnest hope that every exertion would be made by her Majesty's Government to settle our differences with the United States in an amicable manner, and to avert that most deplorable and greatest of evils, war. He was the last man in that House to counsel any course to the Government, and he was sure that if he did that their Lordships would not listen to it, that was calculated in any way to lower the honour or character of this country; for he felt how infinitely important it was that we should maintain that great name, and that warlike character, all over the world, which, thanks to our great naval and military heroes, we had achieved in every quarter of the globe. Through them we had been placed in that proud, commanding, and unquestioned station which we had long enjoyed; and holding which, it made it proper, prudent, and safe for us, without any possibility of reproach, without having our honour in the smallest degree soiled, or tarnished, or reflected on, to lower as much as possible our demands, in order that we might secure, he repeated, without blemish to our honour, the inestimable blessing of peace. That was, in his opinion, the ground and foundation on which her Majesty's Government ought to take their stand. He had the consolation of believing, of being convinced, that we were undeniably, clearly, and manifestly in the wrong; and, when a man or a nation was in the wrong, to acknowledge error did not make the case of either worse.

The Marquess of *Normanby* said, the cases referred to by the noble and learned Lord should be inquired into. He believed, however, that every thing had been regularly done. No doubt could exist as to the legality of the trials and sentences of these people. The returns required should be laid before the House.

The Mauritius.] Lord *Brougham* said, he understood that the provisional order sent out from this country to the Mauritius relative to the emancipation of the slaves, had been negatived in the council there by a majority of one. He had been given to understand, that if that provisional order were not acted on, emancipation should immediately take place. He wished to know what had been done after that order had been rejected? Had the noble Marquess received information of any regulation that might have been subsequently agreed to by the majority of the council on the subject of emancipation.

The Marquess of *Normanby* answered, that a commission had gone out to the Mauritius, but he had as yet received no information on the subject.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Wednesday, March 27, 1839.

Minutes.] Bills. The Royal Assent was given by Commission to the following Bills:—Duke of Wellington's Estate; Tithe Compositions Arrears (Ireland); and to two Private Bills.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Wednesday, March 27, 1839.

Minutes.] Petitions presented. By Captain Alsager, from Lambeth, against any further Grant to Maynooth College.—By Captain Gordon, Messrs. Chalmers, Ellis, and Blair, from several places, in favour of Church Extension in Scotland.—By Lord Hotham, and Mr. Pakington, from two places, for Church Extension in Canada.—By Mr. Buck, and Colonel Lygon, from two places, against the Repeal of the Corn-laws.—By Lord Norreys, from the Clergy of the Archdeaconry of Oxford, against the Ecclesiastical Duties and Revenues.—By Messrs. Gaskell, Ward, and Pakington, from a number of places, for a Uniform Penny Postage.

Railway Monopolies.] Lord *G. Somerset* presented a petition from a great number of warehousemen and others connected with the conveyance of goods from London to Birmingham and Manchester and other places. One of the petitioners had carried on the trade of carrier for twenty-six years, and another for forty years. The petition stated, that soon after the opening of the London and Birmingham Railway, applications had been made by several of the petitioners to the company, for the purpose of having their goods conveyed by the railway, but the answer which they received was, that the company had no means upon their line of conveying the goods. The petition went on to state, that other parties, however, also carriers, had their goods carried by the trains, and complained of the great injustice which this unequal exercise of the monopoly possessed by the company had produced. The petitioners stated, that they did not apply to the House without having first attempted to obtain redress by the ordinary course of law; in January last they had applied to the Court of Queen's Bench for a *mandamus* to compel the railway company to carry their goods, but the *mandamus* was refused, on the ground that the Act of Incorporation contained no clause affording any compulsory process against the company. The petitioners hoped, therefore, that the House would take into consideration the consequences which had arisen from the monopoly granted to the railway company, and they prayed that some statute should be passed by which the purposes of the Railway Act, as expressed in its preamble, namely, the improvement of the means of conveyance, might be carried into effect. The petition was signed by upwards of 180 persons, representing the great warehouses of London, by a great number in Manchester, by fifteen firms connected with the conveyance of goods between London and Manchester, by the whole of the aldermen and the corporation of the city of Chester, and contained in all 3,500 signatures. He might, perhaps, be allowed to take that opportunity of asking the right hon. President of the Board of Trade whether he intended to take any proceeding for the purpose of bringing the subject of railway conveyance before the House.

Mr. *P. Thomson* said, he intended on the first Thursday after the recess, if he had an opportunity, to move for the appointment of a committee upon the subject, not with the intention of taking at present any ulterior measures upon the subject of railroads, but because the state of feeling of the House and of the public generally was such as to render some inquiry upon the subject necessary. Railway companies had, under the acts by which they were incorporated, been invested with very great powers; perhaps those powers might, in some respects, be for the advantage of the public, but they were also capable of being converted into an injurious monopoly.

Lord *G. Somerset* then moved for a return of all sums of money raiseable by railway companies, distinguishing the sums to be raised by subscription from those to be raised by loan or mortgage, and a similar return with respect to companies to be formed under bills now before the House.

Return ordered.

NEW POOR-LAW.] Lord J. Russell having moved that the House, at its rising, do adjourn to Monday, the 8th of April,

Lord *G. Somerset* begged to know if the noble Lord had yet made up his mind as to the course he should pursue with regard to the Poor-law Act; whether it was his intention to propose simply the renewal of the act, or to introduce any alterations respecting the powers of the commissioners and the objectionable clauses — those relating to illegitimate children.

Lord *J. Russell* said, he intended to bring in a bill in the couse of the present Session, by which he proposed to renew the powers of the commissioners, and to adopt some of the recommendations of the Poor-law Committee which sat last year. The bill would likewise give powers to the commissioners respecting unions formed under what was called Gilbert's Act; but it would not give them powers respecting parishes under local acts. He would also introduce other provisions in the bill, but not any alteration on the subject of the bastardy clauses. If he should hereafter deem such to be necessary, he would make it the subject of a separate bill.

CANADA—COLONEL PRINCE.] Mr. *Hume* wished to put a question to the right hon. Gentleman the Under Secretary for the Colonies, to whom he had given a statement respecting Colonel Prince, alleging that that officer had shot, without trial, a number of prisoners who had been brought in by the Indians. He wished to know whether any information had been received at the Colonial-office on the subject.

Mr. *Labouchere* replied, that the last time this subject had been brought under his notice in that House, he stated, that Sir G. Arthur, upon receiving intelligence of the transaction, had called upon Colonel Prince for an explanation. Since then that explanation had been received by Sir G. Arthur, but had not been considered by him satisfactory. The consequence of which was, that a court of inquiry had been constituted, witnesses would be brought forward on both sides, and the inquiry would, therefore, be a protracted one. In justice, however, to Colonel Prince, he should observe, that Sir G. Arthur had stated, that the reports which had made their way into this country through the newspapers were exceedingly exaggerated.

UNITED STATES.—BOUNDARY QUESTION.] Sir *S. Canning* begged leave to address a few observations to the House upon a subject of great national importance—he meant the state of our relations with the United States of America. He thought, that hon. Gentlemen would feel that it would not be satisfactory to the country, that it would scarcely be decent, he might say, if that House were to adjourn for the holidays without an opportunity being afforded to her Majesty's Ministers of making, as far as circumstances would permit, some statement of the position in which we stand towards that power at the present moment. If the present circumstances of the country were of an ordinary character, the House might, perhaps, be satisfied to trust to the discretion of her Majesty's Ministers. But he must say, looking back to the transactions of the last few years, that he saw little reason to induce the House to count upon the energy, the decision, or even upon the discretion of their counsels respecting foreign affairs. By the accounts which had been received within the last few days, it appeared that the transaction which had lately occurred on the borders of the state of Maine had been taken up with a very strong and decided national spirit in the Congress of the United States; that the negotiations, which he understood from the noble Lord at the head of the Foreign Department to have been set on foot, had been suspended, but that there was some reason to suppose, although there were doubts upon the subject, that a plenipotentiary would be sent from America to this country to resume those negotiations for the adjustment of the boundary question. The country was aware, that on one side an official statement had been made that the Lieutenant-Governor of New Brunswick was acting under instructions which imposed upon him the necessity of maintaining, if necessary, by military force, exclusive jurisdiction over the disputed territory; and that, on the other side, it was said, that a document had been signed by the American Minister of State and her Majesty's Minister at Washington, recommending a peaceable arrangement of the question. He was aware of the delicacy of this subject, and he would not advance anything that might produce excitement or embarrass her Majesty's Government. His only object was to afford the noble Lord an opportunity of giving that information to the country which, under existing circumstances, not only with reference to what had occurred in the United States, but in various other parts of the world, might naturally be expected. The questions, therefore, which he had to put were, whether her Majesty's Ministers had received any official intelligence of the appointment of an American plenipotentiary to open a fresh negotiation in London for the adjustment of the boundary question; whether they had reason to believe that Sir John Harvey had acquiesced in the line of conduct recommended to him in the mean time by her Majesty's Minister at Washington and the American Minister of State; and whether they had any objection to lay on the Table of the House a copy of the instruction to which Sir John Harvey referred in his letter of Feb. 18, 1839, to the Governor of Maine, as making it imperative upon him to maintain, even if necessary by military force, an exclusive jurisdiction over the disputed territory? In putting these questions, he had no wish to embarrass her Majesty's Ministers. He sincerely hoped that our relations with the United States, which involved such great commercial and national interests, might be found capable of being maintained in a pacific state, and that the difficulties which had hitherto attended the adjustment of this question would soon be dissipated.

Viscount *Palmerston* quite agreed with the right hon. Gentleman that this was a question of the utmost delicacy and importance. He, therefore, trusted the House would excuse him if he declined to avail himself of the opportunity thus afforded him of entering into a full explanation with respect to the present state of these matters. He thought the answer which he should give to the first question would sufficiently account to the House for the reserve which he felt it his duty to maintain. The right hon. Gentleman asked whether her Majesty's Government had received any acccount of the intention of the government of the United States to send over a special plenipotentiary to this country for the purpose of communicating with the British Government on the subject. He yesterday received a despatch from Mr. Fox, dated the 7th of March, at Washington, communicating to him officially, that the American government had it under consideration whether they should send a special plenipotentiary for that purpose, or whether fresh negotiations would be opened; and as it, therefore, appeared to him some communication might be expected very shortly from the government of the United States in reference to the unfortunate circumstance which had taken place in Maine, and possibly also in referenceto more general questions, he was sure the House would feel that he should be departing from his duty if he were to enter into any discussion or explanation touching those matters upon which it was likely the plenipotentiary might be instructed. With regard to the second question, he had reason to believe, that the last despatches received at the Colonial-office from Sir John Harvey were dated at a time when Sir John Harvey could not have received a communication of the memorandum of Mr. Fox and Mr. Forsyth. With regard to the other part of the question, he was sure his right hon. Friend would see, that it was not expedient at this moment to lay the papers before Parliament. He was convinced that the Government of the United States felt a no less sincere desire than her Majesty's Government that these incidental questions, as well as the main question, and as well as any others which might arise between the two Governments, should be satisfactorily adjusted, and that nothing should occur to interrupt those friendly relations which it was the interest of both countries to maintain.

Mr. *C. Buller* wished to make a remark on a misinterpretation which had been put on some observations he had made the other night, which it had been said were calculated to have a bad effect on the settlement of the question. All he had intended by his remark was to press upon the House his conviction that Great Britain ought to abandon the untenable line, and take that which was in accordance with justice; by doing which she would gain more undisputedly than by attempting to maintain the other by force of arms. In saying, that our claim was untenable, he did not mean to say, that the claim of the other party was at all tenable.

Sir *C. Grey* did not intend to renew the notice which he had on the paper a few evenings ago. He contended, however, that it was open to every Member of that House to express his opinion on the subject of the correspondence between this country and America, which was laid on the Table of the House last year by the noble Lord; and he was surprised to perceive that newspapers of this country seemed to be of a different opinion. If it was not intended that hon. Members should express their opinions upon such documents, for what purpose were they laid before the House? When the reference was made to the King of the Netherlands he gave it as his opinion, that neither the line claimed on the one hand by Great Britain, nor on the other, that which the United States asserted to bethe limits of her territory, did in truth constitute the true boundary. He affirmed, that neither line could be said to answer to the terms of the treaty, and that the matter in dispute must be arranged by adopting an intermediate boundary, or by a cession of territory on the one side, or on the other. Now, he (Sir Charles Grey) was desirous of having laid on the Table of the House, Mitchell's map, which bore date in the year 1755; and he was the more anxious on this account, that he desired to prevent its being confounded in the minds of Members with any more recent map; for as he was prepared to contend, that map, and that only, showed the true line. He had heard—not certainly from any source that he could call an authority—but he had heard, that there was no such map. If that happened to be the case, his purpose would still be in some degree, answered by calling the attention of the House to the fourth article of the treaty. He believed, that the map itself, or a French edition of it, dated in 1756, might be seen at the British museum. There was another map, of which a lithographic sketch had during the last year been laid before the House in connection with papers upon the subject of our North American possessions, and those two, namely Mitchell's map and the sketch he had just mentioned, were according to the convention of 1829, the only maps which were to guide the proceedings of the parties concerned in settling the boundary question. In his opinion, it was very clear either that they must be governed by the maps, or that they must seek to arrange differences upon the footing of an intermediate line, or else by a concession on the one side or on the other.

Sir *R. Peel* said, that as Parliament was now about to adjourn for several days, he did not regret, that some hon. Member should have thought it right to make inquiries of her Majesty's Government on the great question of the disputed boundary between our North American possessions and the United States. He was sure the House would agree with him in thinking, that upon the present occasion the right hon. Gentleman who put those questions had done so in a temper which showed no inclination to throw any impediments in the way of bringing the matters in dispute to a satisfactory conclusion. No one could feel more fully than he (Sir R. Peel) did, the inconvenience which must arise to any Government from a premature demand for papers, or from entering into any discussion respecting the course, which, at a moment like the present, they intended to adopt; for he felt, that in making their defence upon any charges which might be brought against them, Ministers would labour under the disadvantage of not being able to produce all the documents, that might be necessary, lest their disclosure should be prejudicial to the public service; he should, therefore not pursue the matter further than to say, that he fully reserved to himself the right of hereafter discussing whether her Majesty's Government, after rejecting the award of the King of Holland, and after having discovered, that our Canadian subjects had been exposed to apprehension and to danger — he repeated, he should claim for himself, at a future time, the right to consider whether the responsible advisers of the Crown had shown sufficient energy and decision in their attempt to bring this matter to an issue. Limiting himself, then, for the present, to this single remark, he could not at the same time help saying, that if there were any document which could possibly be called for, and the production of which was not liable to be objected to on the part of the Government, as raising any impediment in the way of a satisfactory settlement, he confessed he should have thought, that that document was an old map, dated in the year 1755—a map drawn at a time when no differences could exist between the United States and this country. If that map had any bearing on the question, he did hope that the right hon. Gentleman would persevere in his motion. If the map were not in existence, no jealous feeling need be excited, and he hoped if it did exist, that the particular map which had been moved for, and no more recent map, would be laid upon the Table of the House. It might be, however, that there were some well-founded objections to the production of the map which did not strike his mind. If the greater caution of the right hon. Gentleman suggested any to him, and that he felt unwilling to press his own Friends on the other side of the House, he too highly estimated the right hon. Gentleman's circumspection not to treat it with respect; but if there were no substantial objection to their seeing the old map, he hoped that it might be produced.

Sir *C. Grey* was sorry on so important a question the attention of the right hon. Baronet had been so distracted. He had never said the map was not in existence, and any hon. Gentleman who went to the British Museum could see it there in eight sheets. He felt he had done his duty in calling the attention of the Foreign-office to it, being quite sure, that if it was discovered to be useful there would be no objection to produce it.

Viscount *Palmerston* said, that he understood his right hon. and learned Friend to express a wish that the map in question should be laid on the Table of the House, but at the same time to express some doubts as to its existence. He understood him, further, as not urgently pressing for the production of the map, but rather leaving it to him (Lord Palmerston) to make inquiry on the subject, and bring forward the map if it could conveniently be had. To this he had assented, as they sometimes did in that House, by signs, and it therefore became unnecessary, as he thought, that there should be any motion on the subject.

Sir *R. Peel.* I did not see the signs. If the map mentioned were the real map, the production of it could do no harm, but might do good.

The Motion for the adjournment of the House till the 8th of April was agreed to.

RUSSIA AND TURKEY.] On the question that the Report of the Committee of Supply on navy estimates be received,

Sir *E. Codrington* begged to avail himself of that opportunity to make some observations in reply to what had been stated the other night by the hon. Member for Birmingham, with reference to his conduct while commanding the Mediterranean squadron at the battle of Navarino. He was sorry now to be obliged to trespass on the attention of the House; but the hon. Member's motion not having been seconded, he was prevented at the time from making those remarks which, in justice to his own character and the position he had occupied, he thought it but fair to offer. The hon. Member stated, that he had on the occasion alluded to an order in his pocket to pass the Dardanelles; if he had possessed any such order, his conduct must have appeared very inconsistent; but he had no such authority, although certainly it would have been the means of avoiding many of the difficulties which had since occurred. The hon. Member had also made some observations on the conduct of Russia, which, knowing the facts of the case, he felt himself bound to contradict. It had been said, that the present state of affairs in the Mediterranean was mainly attributable to the Whigs; in his opinion, the Tories were more to blame than the Whigs, but both in fact were implicated. He had stated in the Mediterranean, and he repeated now, that if Mr. Canning had lived to carry out the view he originally took of the treaty of Akerman, no difficulty would have occurred, and Russia never would have gone to war with the Porte. It was the different view taken of that treaty by Mr. Canning's successor in office—it was the use of that fatal word "untoward," which gave rise to all the difficulty. That word "untoward" led Turkey to believe that the alliance was at an end, that France and England were of different opinions, and that Russia would be left to take her own course. The consequence was, the Turks, to insure the execution of the treaty of Akerman, forced Russia into a war, that led to her aggrandizement, for when she did go to war, of course she had a right to do the best for herself she could. When Turkey looked to England for assistance against Mehemet Ali, what was our situation? He was then in command of the squadron, and he would say this—had they had five more sail of the line, Mehemet Ali would have been stopped, and Turkey would not have been thrown into the arms of Russia. He deeply regretted, that from false economy the navy had been reduced to so low a state; at the same time he could not but think, that for the discussion which had lately taken place upon that subject, they were more indebted to the influence of party motives, than to any general desire to promote the efficiency of the service.

Sir *R. Peel* said, that as the gallant officer had thought it necessary to introduce this subject, he might also take occasion to observe, that in the speech by which the hon. Member for Birmingham prefaced his unseconded motion, not a few hard words had been applied to him; but even if that motion had been seconded, he did not know that he should have felt called on to give any reply. There was throughout an utter oblivion of dates, a total confusion and misstatement of facts. He was charged, for instance, with being a party reponsible for the proceedings of a Government with which he had not acted; so that if he had been called on, he really did not know how he should have been able to reply to such a speech. In fact, the only construction he could put on it was, not that any real alarm existed, even in the mind of the hon. Gentleman, with respect to the state of our national defence, but that so great was his attachment to irredeemable paper, so urgent his anxiety for an issue of one pound notes, that he was perfectly ready to risk all the consequences of any war, however detrimental to the interests of the country, provided only it might lead to the adoption of his favourite monetary panacea.

Report received.

The House went into Committee of

Supply.—Ordnance Estimates.] Sir *H. Vivian* regretted, that on account of indisposition, it would not be in his power to go into the subject of the Ordnance estimates so fully as he could have wished; he hoped, however, that the indulgent consideration of the House would not attribute any deficiency which might appear in his statement to a want of proper attention on the part of the Board. It was fortunately the less necessary for him to enter into much lengthened explanation, because the estimates themselves ever since the Duke of Wellington had been Master-General, were so clear and comprehensive that any hon. Gentleman might at once understand them. Contenting himself with observing, that he should have been wanting in his duty to the Crown and the country, if he had under any circumstances allowed the great department under his charge to fall into a state of inefficiency for any extraordinary emergency which might arise, he would at once proceed to point out how the excess of expense beyond last year was to be incurred. In the first vote, which had reference to the Tower and Pall-mall, there was an excess of £.1,057, which arose from additional establishments of clerks, &c., which had been found necessary in New South Wales and Canada. In the second vote, which was for the Royal Engineers, Sappers, and Miners, there would be found an excess of £.33,430; that was an excess in appearance more than in reality. A considerable portion of it, £26,598, for various allowances to the officers of Royal Engineers and Sappers and Miners, was formerly charged on the extraordinaries, but had now been transferred to the ordinary estimate. There was also an additional company of sappers and miners at Corfu, which was to be paid for out of the contribution of 25,000*l.* per annum received from the Ionian states. Hitherto the sum contributed by those islands had not appeared on the estimates; but he had felt it to be his duty to bring the matter under the eye of Parliament; and it would now be seen, as he had stated, that the increase in this vote was more apparent than real. There was also a charge for an additional company of sappers and miners sent to Canada. That caused an increase of 2,560*l.* in that item. The vacant commissions in the engineers had also created an increase of 1,800*l.* The next point to which he should call the attention of the committee was the third vote, that for the Royal Artillery, including an addition of 216 men for Canada, amounting to 6,550. Here too was a transfer from the extraordinaries to the Ordnance estimates, including 6,372*l.* for beer-money to the artillery. Looking at the extraordinary demands which had been made during the last three years on the artillery for Canada, for St. Helena, and for other quarters of our empire, the increase was not more than sufficient; and, if he had erred at all, it was rather in leaving that force deficient than in augmenting it too much. As he was willing to hope that circumstances might arise which would liberate a part of these men, he had been unwilling to ask her Majesty's Ministers to make any increase to the force at present. Here, too, several commissions had been filled up among the junior officers, which had occasioned an increase of 2,000*l.* The fourth vote was for the salaries of the barrack-masters in the United Kingdom and on foreign stations. Here, too, was an increase of 1,287*l.*, occasioned by the establishment of three new barracks; two of them in Canada, rendered necessary in consequence of the disturbances there, and one in Australia. The fifth vote was for the extraordinaries, including ordnance work and repairs, storekeepers' expenditure, pay of clerks of works, building and repair of barracks, barrack-masters' expenditure, &c. Here there was an increase of 28,968*l.* apparently. This increase would have amounted to 50,000*l.* had it not been for some diminutions which had been effected in some details. The charges in the Ionian islands amounted to 13,000*l.*, but these would be defrayed by the Ionian islands themselves. There was also an addition of 11,000*l.* for labour, the workmen being now engaged six instead of five days in the week. There was also an increase of 10,000*l.* for building lock-up houses at the different barracks, in order to supersede the necessity of corporal punishments. There was also 10,000*l.* extra expenditure for new barracks. The Ordnance was called upon to take the charge of the new barracks erected in the colonies. This of course increased the charge for them in the estimates, and therefore it was not fair to compare the charge of this year with that of last. 10,000*l.* had been added in consequence of the expenditure thus incurred in St. Helena, Gambia, and Australia. These items had never before appeared in the Ordnance estimates. The excess of the next item, the 6th in the votes, above that of last year, was 3,643*l.* In this item was included the survey of England, Scotland, and Ireland. The excess of expenditure this year above that of last year for the survey was 11,000*l.* It had been deemed important that the survey should be pressed in all the three countries, and therefore it was proposed to take a larger sum this year; and if it had not been for a diminution of 8,000*l.* which had been effected in the civil and military contingencies, the excess of this item would have been upwards of 11,000*l.* He could assure the committee that every possible saving consistent with the efficiency of the department had been made in this item. The next, and the most important vote of all, was the vote for stores. On that vote there was an excess of 63,000*l.* above that of last year. Last year the vote for small arms was 25,000*l.*; this year it was 30,000*l.* He should state that the establishment of small arms had been reduced as far as it could be with propriety; it was now under 200,000 stand. He had let it go so low, because it was quite clear that in case of war we should have to provide ourselves with improved arms; and whenever that event took place the officer at the head of the Ordnance would have to come down to the House and ask for a large vote to provide percussion arms. He had taken great pains in looking into this branch of the subject; and he was happy to say that considerable improvement had been already made. If our soldiers were again called upon to take the field, they must be provided with arms in which they could place perfect confidence. A committee had sat, of which his gallant Friend near him (Colonel Anson) was the chairman, and had decided as to what were the best arms for the cavalry, the infantry, and the rifles. The first recommendation of the committee was, that the arms for all three services should be of a similar bore. Formerly the musket, the rifle, the carbine, and the pistol, were all of different bore. Now they would all be of the same bore, and the bullet would be the same for all these different descriptions of arms. The percussion rifle had been highly approved by the rifle corps, and also by the Commander-in-chief. The carbine which had been provided for the cavalry had also been approved of in the highest terms. He had received a report from the colonel in command of the 5th Dragoon Guards, now in Canada, and also from the colonel of the 7th Hussars, stating that they were the best arms of their kind which they had ever seen. The musket for the infantry was also a superior description of arms; and he held in his hand a report of the result of a trial which had been made between it and the flint musket. Out of 2,000 rounds by percussion arms, nine only missed fire; out of 2,000 rounds by flint-muskets, 822 missed fire. By percussion arms there were out of that number 777 hits, by flint-muskets 540 only; so that the number of miss-fires by flint-muskets, instead of being only nine out of 2,000, was nearly one-half, and considerably more than a third, and the number of hits by the percussion muskets was greater than the number by flint-muskets by the excess of 777 over 540. In case therefore of war, it would only be justice to the soldier to have him provided with percussion arms. In the next vote, which contained the expense of services performed by the office of Ordnance, and not provided for by Parliament in 1838-9, there was a small increase of 989*l.* In the ninth vote, which was for superannuated allowances, there was a diminution of 5,449*l.*; and in the tenth vote, which was for commissariat supplies, there was also a diminution of 1,990*l.* There was thus upon the whole estimates a sum of 150,049*l.* more to be voted this year than had been voted last year. The hon. and gallant Officer concluded by moving that there be granted to her Majesty a sum not exceeding 116,851*l.*, for the purpose of defraying the civil establishments of the Ordnance at the Tower and Pall-mall, of the departments at Woolwich, of the out-stations in the United Kingdom, and of the foreign stations.

Mr. *Hume* complimented the right hon. and gallant Officer upon the clear manner in which the Ordnance estimates were this year drawn up. Considering the circumstances under which the estimates for the army and navy had been voted this year, it did not appear to him right to detain the House, as it would otherwise have been his duty to do, upon these estimates. After we had determined to employ a certain number of men in the army and in the navy, we were bound to supply them with all they required to make their service effective. Considering, also, how necessary it was to provide for the efficiency of the Royal Artillery, he should not object to the present vote. Though these estimates were, in his opinion, double what they ought to be in time of peace, yet they were not out of proportion to the number of men voted. Our engineers might vie with those of any service in Europe, and yet, strange to say, there was nothing like the same proportion of engineer officers on the staff of the army in our service, that there was in the army of every other nation in Europe. He protested against making these large increases in all the estimates, when it was notorious that the revenue was deficient. The House ought not to vote such estimates, until the Chancellor of the Exchequer had explained his ways and means for the year. He complained of the studied evasion of the Chancellor of the Exchequer on that point. He thought, that with such estimates the right hon. Gentleman would have no other alternative than that of adding to the taxes of the country. He objected to the system now acted on. The country was in a wretched state. It had no Government, and no Opposition. There was a strong and well-compacted party Opposition; but no economical Opposition. As a Reformer he was in a false position, and though very unwilling to change sides, his duty almost forced him to do it. He hoped, however, that the times would mend.

Vote agreed to.

On the sum of 330,326*l.* being proposed for defraying the charges for Ordnance works, repairs, &c., in the United Kingdom and the Colonies,

Mr. *Hume* thought, the charges made for the admission of the public to the Tower and other public buildings should be discontinued.

Colonel *Anson* said, the charge for admission to the Tower was very small, being only one shilling; but he should be very happy to see all fees for admittance to the Tower and similar buildings, abolished.

Mr. *Wakley* said, the fee of one shilling was large or small, according to the means of the individual paying it. A shilling was of more importance to a poor man who earned but 12*s.* or 13*s.* a week, than 500*l.* or 600*l.* was to the gallant Colonel. It was surprising to find, when the money of the people was voting away, that out of 320 Members of the Opposition in that House, there were six now present. The right hon. Baronet, the Member for Tamworth, was probably of opinion, that it was not for them to object to the voting of money, which his party would have the spending of. It was, however, a woeful thing to think that, with a reduced revenue, the expenditure of the present year was to be increased beyond that of the last by nearly three millions. And yet the present Ministers came into office as a reforming and an economic Government. He hoped some explanation of the increase in the vote would be given.

Sir *Hussey Vivian* said, the increase to which the hon. Member alluded, arose from additional pay being allowed to medical officers for length of service. The increased allowance did not, however, extend to assistant surgeons. He thought there were great objections to throwing open such a place as the Tower, containing 100,000 stand of flinted arms, to the public indiscriminately.

Mr. *Briscoe* condemned the principle of compelling the public to pay 1*s.* each for admittance to the Tower.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* said, it was the wish of the Government to give every facility to the public to view every object of interest over which the Government had any control.

Vote agreed to.

On the Question that a sum of 144,061*l.* be granted for the Barrack Service.

Colonel *Thomas* complained of the state in which the barracks were. They had not been painted in many cases for several years—they were a disgrace to the country. He was surprised to find the hon. Member for Kilkenny who had amassed a large fortune in India by supplying rations to the army, getting up night after night in the House and opposing every measure that would tend to the comfort and convenience of the soldier.

Mr. *Hume* would give a flat denial to the statement of the gallant Officer opposite that he was in the habit of opposing every measure that was brought forward for the good of the army—it was utterly untrue; he had never opposed any measure calculated to attain that object. No man in the House had done more to improve the condition of the private soldier than he had done; he would merely allude to his attempts to do away with the punishment of flogging. With regard to what had taken place in India, the gallant Officer had been talking on a subject about which he could know nothing. His statements were utterly untrue. The gallant Officer had uttered falsehoods in that House. He had talked about his feeding the troops, what did he mean by speaking on such subjects? He had never done anything in his life that he was not proud of, and therefore he called upon the hon. and gallant Officer to state what he meant by such an unwarrantable attack to which he had given its proper designation. He hoped he would be more cautious the next time as to the statements he made, as it would be utterly impossible public business could be carried on if attacks were made in this way. Whether he was connected with physic or not, he would defy any one to say he had ever done anything he ought to be ashamed of. The conduct of the gallant Officer might appear extraordinary, but the House would perceive from his manner the reason of his conduct.

Colonel *Thomas* said, that the circumstance to which he alluded was well known. The hon. Gentleman had been an assistant surgeon, and afterwards appointed commissary. [Mr. *Hume*: That is not true.] He had heard so when he was in India. With regard to the hon. Gentleman's assertion that he had uttered a falsehood, it was too contemptible for him to notice, it was beneath his contempt.

The *Chairman* said, these were attacks which ought not to be made; he very much lamented that this conversation had ensued.

Sir *R. H. Vivian* said, if the barracks were in a disgraceful state, the hon. and gallant Member was himself to blame. When he had first become Ordnance Master he had sent a circular round, in 1836, to the barrack-masters, ordering everything to be prepared for the comfort of the troops, and ordering anything that was wanted to be stated; and therefore, if there was any want, those who had command of the barracks were the persons to blame, and not the Ordnance Department. If complaints had been made in the proper quarter, they would have been attended to directly.

Colonel *Thomas* had not reflected, either personally on Sir H. Vivian, or on his department. What he had stated was the fact—that the barracks were in a disgraceful state, and had not been painted for years. He (Colonel Thomas) understood from the gallant officer of the district, that so far from not having made any complaints, he had written as many reports respecting the state of the barracks as would fill a room.

Vote agreed to.

The next motion was, that the sum of 188,000*l.* be granted for defraying the charge for stores for the ordnance and military-store branch.

Captain *Boldero* wished to know if the marines were not to have great-coats allowed them. It would only cost the country 2,000*l.* He had brought before the country the situation in which the marines were, the other night. There were 1,200 men serving in Spain with the artillery, and these marines had to find their great-coats. He was of opinion that they were entitled to have their coats provided. He had proved that the order of 1805 authorized this as clearly as possible, and that order had never been rescinded. They were therefore bound to prove the authority on which they made the marine pay for his great-coat. If they had it not, it ceased as a matter of course. It would make the marines happy and content to put them under the same regulations as the other soldiers, which he thought ought to be done.

Viscount *Howick* said, the marines were not subject to any disadvantage. The disadvantage was the other way; they were a favoured branch of the service. He thought these comparisons between the pay of different branches of the service ought not to be made without extreme caution, and certainly not without a more accurate knowledge of facts, than the hon. and gallant officer had shown.

Vote agreed to.

The House resumed, and adjourned for the Easter Holidays to April 8th.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Monday, April 8, 1838.

MINUTES.] Bills. Read a first time:—Registration of Leases (Scotland); Consolidated Fund (8,000,000*l.*).—Read a second time:—Prisons; District Prisons.

Petitions presented. By Lord WORSLEY, from the Poor-law Guardians of Swynford, against any Alteration of the New Poor-law Act.—By Mr. ELLIOTT, from Kelso, Mr. M'CLEOD, from Inverness, Mr. MUSKETT, from St. Albans, and Sir EDWARD CODRINGTON, from Devonport, for a Uniform Penny Postage.—By the LORD-ADVOCATE, from Leith, in favour of the Caledonian Canal.—By Mr. HOGG, from Beverley, for the Repeal of the Beer-laws.—By Mr. W. S. O'BRIEN, from places in the county of Limerick, for equal rights to Ireland.—By Lord JAMES STUART, from Ayr, for the Total and Immediate Repeal of the Corn-laws.—By Sir J. Y. BULLER, from Dartford (Devon), against the Repeal of the Corn-laws.—By Mr. FRESHFIELD, and Sir ROBERT INGLIS, from several places, for Extension of the Established Church in Canada.—By Lord JAMES STUART, from two places in Ayrshire, in favour of, and by Mr. R. FERGUSON, and Mr. M'TAGGART, from Preston, Kirk, and Wigton, against a further Grant of money to the Church of Scotland.—By Lord STANLEY, from Lancashire, against any system of National Education not founded on the Scriptures.—By Lord JAMES STUART, from Ayr, for the Ballot, and a comprehensive system of National Education.

UNITED STATES AND ENGLAND BOUNDARY.] Sir *W. Molesworth* said, that in the documents laid on the Table reference was made to instructions, that were to be sent out to Mr. Fox, in compliance with terms of a note to the American minister (Mr. Forsyth), for the purpose of forming a joint commission for the survey and exploration of the disputed territory. He wished to ask the noble Lord whether he could state the precise period when Mr. Fox received those instructions; and, secondly, he wished to know if the American government agreed to the commission for the survey of this territory, and whether Mr. Fox had received instructions as to the nomination of the commissioners?

Viscount *Palmerston* believed, that there was every disposition on the part of both governments to form a joint commission, for the purpose of seeing whether they could settle the boundary line in conformity with the treaty of 1783. He had very recently sent out to Mr. Fox a draft of a convention for this purpose. If this were agreed to and settled, the nomination of the commissioners would not rest with Mr. Fox, but the appointments would be made by her Majesty's Government. When, however, the transaction was concluded, either by the acceptance or the rejection of the convention, he would lay the correspondence before the House.

THE CHARTISTS.] Colonel *Sibthorp* wished to ask the noble Lord, the Secretary for the Home Department, whether there was any truth in the statements that were made as to a great number of pikes having been made in various parts of the country, and that they had been distributed in the provinces, more especially in the vicinity of Manchester. He wished to know whether the Government was aware, that there was any truth in the statement, and also, whether the noble Lord intended to take any steps in the matter.

Lord *John Russell* replied, that in the early part of the evening an hon. Friend of his had moved for a copy of a letter on this subject from him to the various Lords-lieutenant of the several counties; when this letter was laid on the Table, he trusted that the hon. Gentleman would find a satisfactory answer to his question.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Tuesday, April 9, 1839.

MINUTES.] Bill. Read a second time:—Consolidated Fund (8,000,000*l.*).

Petitions presented. By Sir G. SINCLAIR, and Messrs. LOCKHART, and MACKENZIE, from several places, for Church Extension in Scotland.—By Mr. DENNISTOUN, from Glasgow, against parts of the Prisons (Scotland) Bill.—By Messrs. DENNISTOUN, SANFORD, COLQUHOUN, R. STUART, and Lord FITZALAN, from a number of places, for a Uniform Penny Postage.—By Mr. W. DUNCOMBE, from a place in the North Riding (York), against the Bastardy Clauses in the Poor-law Act; from two places, for Protection to the Church in Canada; and from five places, against the Repeal of the Corn-laws.—By Sir E. KNATCHBULL, from a parish in Kent, for Protection to the Church in Canada; and from several places, for a Uniform Penny Postage.—By Mr. WYNN, from places in the Dioceses of St. Asaph's, and Bangor, for applying the Surplus arising from the Union of the Sees to the Improving poor Livings within the Diocese.—By Sir ROBERT INGLIS, from one place, against the Ecclesiastical Duties and Revenues Bill; and from Borough-Bridge, for Church Extension in Canada.—By Mr. F. FRENCH, from Roscommon, against the Abolition of the Corn-laws.—By Sir R. PEEL, from Ayr, to the same effect.—By Mr. VILLIERS, from Bilston, for a Uniform Penny Postage; and from Perth, for the Total and Immediate Repeal of the Corn-laws.

INCLOSURE ACTS.] Mr. *Eaton* moved the second reading of the Melbourne (Cambridge) Inclosure Bill.

Mr. *Harvey* took that opportunity of calling the attention of the House to the general subject of inclosure bills. One could not read the different bills of this description which were brought before the House without being struck with the discrepancies between them. In some Acts the whole quantity of waste land which was to be inclosed was stated, while in others no such statement was to be found. The quantity of land, too, proposed to be set apart for the recreation of the people of the district, was very various in different bills, and was, in fact, subject to no general rule, and, he believed, in no case exceeded ten acres. Now, it was very important to the House to know the quantity of land proposed to be inclosed, and the quantity intended to be reserved for the purpose of affording recreation, in order to judge of the proportion which the one bore to the other. In some bills, the lord of the manor received one-twentieth of the inclosed land as a compensation for his rights, in others only one-seventeenth where the circumstances were precisely the same. In many bills there was no provision for the inclosure of the portion set apart for the public, although in some bills then before him, the expense of inclosing the land allotted to the clergy in respect of tithe, was to be defrayed out of the funds in the hands of the commissioners. He suggested it would be a wholesome safeguard, if for the future, not only the quantity of land to be inclosed were stated, but also what proportion of it was intended to be reserved for public recreation. He also thought, that the same provision should be made for inclosing the part reserved for the people, as was made in favour of the clergy and the lord of the manor; and that provision should be made for preserving the ground and keeping up the fences. He threw out these suggestions, because bills of this description were considered merely as private business, and received in general no attention from the House.

Bill read a second time.

Railways.] Mr. *P. Thomson* on the order of the day for the further consideration of the report on the Great Western Railway Bill, said, that he should now submit to the House the motion of which he had given notice. He at the same time wished to say, that he intended the day after to-morrow to move for a select Committee to inquire into and report upon the subject of railway bills generally, and until that should be disposed of, he thought it best that no further progress be made with railway bills. He should therefore, move, that the further consideration of the report on any railway bill be not entertained before Tuesday, the 23d of April. In his opinion the delay of this additional week could not produce any material inconvenience, and he hoped, that the House would agree to it.

Mr. *R. Palmer* seconded the motion, and as an instance showing its necessity, he need only advert to the provisions contained in the Great Western Railway Amendment Bill. No one looking at that bill could doubt, that its object was to enable the company to raise more money, and for himself, upon looking at the breviate, he felt great surprise at the increased powers given to the company by the new bill. He found, that the original bill consisted of twenty clauses, and the present bill of twenty-nine, not one word of which would be understood as the original bill stood. The company had the power of taking possession of and entertaining any lands within a certain distance of the railway for the purpose of depositing earth, stones, &c.—and giving such compensation as a Jury might determine. That was a very strong power to give to any company, and in his own case not less than fifty acres of good arable land had been taken possession of on his estate, for the purpose of depositing earth, stones, &c., which it was impossible could ever be removed, and the result would be a permanent occupation. The 18th clause of the present bill proposed to repeal the clause in the original bill, which gave the company the power to enter into the temporary occupation of any land, and then enacted, that it should be lawful for the company to enter upon the land of any person as aforesaid for the purpose of depositing thereon, either temporarily or permanently—any earth, stones, &c. The agents for the bill had stated, this was nothing but a bill for raising money, and they then took the opportunity of introducing other most important clauses.

Mr. *Hawes* said, that to the motion of the hon. Member the President of the Board of Trade, he should under ordinary circumstances have given his support, and he was rather surprised at the statements made by the hon. Member opposite. He was informed, that the bill was strictly a money bill, but the hon. Member had certainly pointed out clauses inconsistent with that object. He was informed by the agent and solicitor for the bill, that not one of those clauses of which the hon. Member had complained, had been introduced by the promoters of the bill; and, on the contrary, they were considered hostile to the interests of the company, and had been forced upon them by authority in another place. It was well known, that a noble Lord in another place exercised a sort of jurisdiction (he would admit a most advantageous one to the public in general), and these clauses had been introduced by his authority. The bill was, therefore, strictly a bill for raising a further sum of money, and he was authorized to state, that great public as well as private inconvenience would be the result if any material delay took place. He could not agree with his right hon. Friend in his system of *ex post facto* legislation. The whole subject of railway police and regulation, should have been taken up long ago, instead of having been left to the present hour, and he thought the proposition came with a very bad grace from his right hon. Friend. Under these circumstances he hoped the House would allow the report to be received.

Mr. *Freshfield* denied, that the motion was one which ought to be called an *ex post facto* measure. The company declared, that they were unable to proceed, and they came to Parliament to enable them to raise more money. While that question was before the House they were perfectly at liberty to adopt any regulations which they thought proper in reference to railway bills, and apply them to the case then under consideration.

Mr. *Hawes* would move as an amendment, that the report on the Great Western Railway Bill do form an exception to the motion then before the House.

Mr. *P. Thomson* said, that if the House adopted the amendment then proposed by the hon. Member for Lambeth, he should not think it expedient to bring forward the motion of which he had given notice for a select committee. In the event of the amendment being successful, he should abandon all hope of doing the least service by means of a select committee. At the present moment they had certain railway bills before them. Let them permit the present opportunity to pass away, then indeed the proceeding would be in the nature of an *ex post facto* law, and he and those who thought with him, could not hope for a successful issue to that which they proposed, otherwise than by means of a much stronger case than would now be considered necessary.

Mr. *Hawes* finding the sense of the House to be against him, would not put them to the trouble of dividing.

Motion agreed to,

JAMAICA—SUSPENSION OF THE CONSTITUTION.] Mr. *Labouchere* said, that in rising to move for leave to bring in a bill to suspend the existing constitution of the island of Jamaica, and to provide for the temporary government of that colony, he felt fully conscious that he had undertaken no light task, and that he had to bring under their consideration no ordinary measure. He felt completely aware, that to bring forward any proposition, the object of which was to abrogate even for a season that form of government by three estates, for which Englishmen entertained such deep and such just respect, was a proceeding of the very gravest kind; it certainly was one which he could not approach without feelings of the greatest reluctance. It was one which the responsible advisers of the Crown could not sanction without experiencing much pain, and bestowing upon the subject much reflection. It was one to which he trusted the House would direct its serious and undivided attention, for although the statements which he should have to lay before them were made up of dry and uninteresting details, yet he hoped they would feel that the present was an occasion upon which they were called upon to assume a judicial character of the highest kind; that they would, therefore, be sensible of the necessity of lending an attentive ear to the considerations which were to be brought under their notice, and at the same time of granting him that indulgence usually extended to those on whom the task devolved of proposing, explaining, and defending, on the part of the Government, any great measure of state policy. In the first place, he fully anticipated, that he should be supported by the unanimous concurrence of the House, when he asserted, that the state of things in Jamaica imperatively demanded the interference of Parliament. Whatever differences of opinion might prevail as to the causes which had led to this unhappy condition of affairs, there was no one who read the papers laid upon the Table of the House, or became acquainted with the information put forth in the public newspapers, but must see that Jamaica was in a state which cannot be regarded with indifference, and which demanded instant and effectual remedy. He had now, therefore, to propose to the House the adoption of that course which, under present circumstances, the Government thought it most expedient to recommend. The responsible advisers of the Crown came to the House for counsel, and for correction and reproof, if the measures which they proposed were of evil tendency, but for encouragement, assistance, and support, if those measures were just, politic, and necessary. In the month of October last year, Sir L. Smith called together the Legislature of Jamaica. There certainly never was a period in the history of that colony when subjects of more grave or momentous importance had to be discussed, and when they required more to have been considered impartially and deliberately. It was the first time the Legislature had met after the passing of that Act which had put an end to the system of apprenticeship in Jamaica, and which had given unqualified freedom to the great body of the negro population. At the meeting of the House of Assembly, in answer to a speech from the Governor, that house stated they would proceed to no business, with the exception of passing certain acts necessary to maintain the public credit of the island—that they would proceed to no other business, in consequence of an Act passed at the end of last Session by the Imperial Parliament which went by the name of the West India Prisons Act. The House of Assembly stated:—

"The House would have been ready now, as they ever have been, to give their consideration to every matter submitted to them for promoting the public welfare of the colony; but, having taken into their mature consideration the aggressions which the British Parliament continue to make on the rights of the people of this colony, and the confusion and mischief which must result from the present anomalous system of government, they have come to the determination that they will best consult their own honour, the rights of their constituents, and the peace and well-being of the colony, by abstaining from the exercise of any legislative function, except such as may be necessary to preserve inviolate the faith of the island with the public creditor, until they shall be left to the free exercise of their inherent rights as British subjects."

This resolution, on which this address was founded, was carried by a majority of twenty-four to five. The Governor upon this prorogued the House of Assembly for a few days: on their meeting again, he expressed his hope that they would proceed with the public business, and detailed many important measures which it would be his duty, in pursuance of directions from the home government, to lay before them. He said:

"It will be my duty to lay before you various communications from her Majesty's Government, explanatory of the grounds upon which her Majesty, in the exercise of her prerogative, has been pleased to disallow certain laws of the island, and conveying her Majesty's recommendation, that provision should be made by the Colonial Legislature for the introduction of several measures of vital interest to all classes of her Majesty's subjects in Jamaica, amongst which, are included those having for their objects the prevention of vagrancy, the better regulating the relative rights and duties of masters and servants in husbandry or other kind of handicraft, the determining the qualification of electors, the regulation of a militia, and the preventing the unauthorised occupation of lands, belonging either to the Crown or private individuals."

To this communication the House of Assembly returned the following answer:

"We thank your Excellency for your speech at the opening of the session. We feel, in common with your Excellency, the emergency in which the country may be placed by the expiration of the annual laws, and we also are well aware of the necessity which, in our present state of society, exists, that laws for the prevention of vagrancy, for regulating the relative rights and duties of masters and servants, for determining the qualification of electors, for the regulation of the militia, and for preventing the unauthorised occupation of land, should be enacted; but we are keenly alive to the fact, that our legislative rights have been violated; and so long as these rights continue to be invaded, we feel ourselves compelled to adhere to our resolutions of last session."

This address was carried by a majority of twenty-one to three. The Council did not coincide in these proceedings of the House of Assembly, but agreed unanimously to take the several subjects alluded to by the Governor into their immediate consideration. On receiving this answer from the House of Assembly, Sir Lionel Smith determined to appeal to the constituent body of Jamaica, and dissolved the Assembly, and directed the new legislative body to assemble on the 18th of December, which they did on that day. The new House of Assembly, when it assembled, confirmed the resolutions of their predecessors, and returned the following answer to the speech that was addressed to it by the Governor. After expressing their intentions not to proceed to business, they state:—

"We beg sincerely to assure your Excellency, that in deciding upon this course, we have done so with extreme reluctance. We see the inconvenience that must result from it. We are more than sensible of the many existing evils which loudly call for laws to remedy them; but we are, at the same time, equally sensible that the power is no longer left in our hands to apply the remedy. Our legislative rights have been directly invaded by Parliament, enacting a law to regulate our gaols, a measure of internal and municipal regulation clearly and palpably within our province. Even in our ordinary legislative proceedings, instead of being left to the exercise of our own deliberative judgment, we are fettered by an over-ruling authority, and our best exertions often defeated. Nor can we conceal from ourselves the fact, that even such of our laws as have received the sanction of the Crown are rendered, in a great measure, inoperative from an influence, not only biassing the decisions of the stipendiary justices, but which would seem to over-rule the executive authority itself."

In consequence of this address from the House of Assembly, and as it was clear that no business was likely to be transacted, Sir Lionel Smith prorogued that body and made a representation to the Government at home as to what had taken place. In transmitting the proceedings of this second House of Assembly to the home Government, Sir

Lionel Smith made the observations which he would read to the House. They were contained in a despatch addressed to Lord Glenelg:—

"My late despatches will have prepared your Lordship for the event which the new House of Assembly brought about—a confirmation of the resolutions of the last house, to do no business in consequence of the interference of Parliament in passing the Prison Bill. All my endeavours to induce the house to proceed in their duties having failed, the country is placed in great confusion, from the absence of the annual laws on which the public creditor depends, and the public departments are regulated. About seventeen of these laws will expire at the end of this month, and among others the Police Bill, which force I must, consequently, discharge. I may probably, on the authority of your Lordship in former exigencies, have occasion to entertain a small constabulary force in lieu of the armed police, on which I shall report hereafter. Your Lordship will be fully satisfied from this last appeal to the electoral body, that no House of Assembly can now be found that will acknowledge the authority of the Queen, Lords, and Commons to enact laws for Jamaica, or that will be likely to pass just and prudent laws for that large portion of the negro population lately brought into freedom; and your Lordship will be perfectly aware I have no power, as the Governor, to remedy the evils arising from the House of Assembly having refused to perform its functions. Thus, a constituency which may be computed at about 1,500 or 1,600 voters for the whole island, have returned, and will continue to return, the same members who deny the authority of the mother country, while upwards of 300,000 of her Majesty's free and loyal subjects are totally unrepresented, and my appeal to obtain for them common laws of protection as labourers, has, your Lordship will find, been totally disregarded."

He believed this would be the most proper time for him to direct the attention of the House to what, undoubtedly, it was most material to bear in mind throughout the entire consideration of the subject—he meant the relation in which the House of Assembly, as at present constituted, and the constituent body in reality stood towards the whole population of the island. He believed, that of the three classes into which the population of Jamaica was divided, the following numbers might be taken as a pretty accurate account. There were, he believed, at the present moment in Jamaica about 5,000 white persons; about 28,000 coloured persons, who had been free for some time; and 320,000 lately emancipated negroes. The constituent body of Jamaica, which was represented by Sir Lionel Smith at 1,600, consisted, he rather believed, of about 2,000; while actually at the present moment, and from the law of registration which now existed in that island, fifteen months must elapse before any of the 320,000 newly emancipated negroes could acquire the elective franchise. The House of Assembly, therefore, consisting of forty-five members, was actually returned by a constituency of 2,000; the whole of the newly emancipated class having neither directly nor indirectly the slightest weight in their election. The House would perceive, that the point on which the Assembly of Jamaica were at issue with this country was the Act which passed the Imperial Parliament last year, and which went by the name of the West India Prisons' Bill. But in referring to the fact, that the controversy of the House of Assembly was not merely with the executive Government of this country, but also with the Imperial Legislature, he hoped it would not be supposed, that he wished to urge hon. Members at once to conclude, that of necessity the Imperial Legislature was right and the House of Assembly was wrong, and that, on the mere statement of that fact, they should proceed at once to punish as contumacious those who had ventured to resist their authority. He hoped he should not be suspected of arguing in that tone and manner; quite the contrary. He should ill represent the feelings of the Government if he gave rise to the supposition, that he wished to make a screen of the House of Commons or the Imperial Legislature to conceal or shelter any thing like error or imperfection which might have characterised any measures that had been formerly recommended by the Government to Parliament. He did not ask the House at once to conclude, because they differed from the Legislature of Jamaica, that, therefore, the Legislature of Jamaica must be in the wrong; but he did ask them carefully to review all the proceedings which they had taken in this matter. Those proceedings might have been taken in haste—they might have been founded in error—they might have been adopted in the confidence not unusually given to the general recommendations of the Colonial Minister; and if they were in error, if they had acted unadvisedly or rashly, a sense of justice, dignity, and duty required that they should retrace their steps; but if, on the contrary, after a careful consideration of the whole facts, they should be of opinion that they had acted rightly, and that the House of Assembly were wrong in the course they had adopted of resisting the law passed by the Imperial Legislature, then he thought he should be entitled to call upon them to maintain their former decision, and support the executive Government in the course they now felt it their duty to pursue. He would, in the first place, state as clearly and as briefly as he could, the steps which had led to the enactment of the Prison Bill, and the principles on which it was founded. Doubtless, the regulation of prison discipline formed a very important part of the legislation of every people. It was a matter of honourable distinction to the age in which we lived, that the public mind had recently been awakened to the great importance of this subject in relation to the general welfare of the people; it had acquired new interest, and increased care was taken with respect to it, in every civilised country in Europe. But, important as it must be, every where and at all times, that proper regulations should be made with respect to prisons, it acquired an additional importance in a state of society constituted like our West-India possessions. So long as the great body of the population was held in a state of slavery, the question of prison discipline scarcely arose; all punishments were inflicted by the domestic authority of the master. The proprietor of a slave was reluctant to immure him in a gaol, because he thereby deprived himself of his labour, and the state of the prisons in those islands, being then of comparatively no consequence, attracted but little attention. But the moment slavery was abolished, and the apprenticeship system abandoned, it became a question of great consequence. From that moment the power of punishment was taken out of the hands of the master; all he could do was, to bring his charge against the delinquent negro, who was then committed to gaol or the house of correction. It became, then, a matter of the utmost consequence to take care of the regulation and management of those gaols and houses of correction. If their regulation and management were left in the hands of the planters exclusively, there must obviously be the greatest danger that a system of punishments would be introduced which indirectly would keep up the worst vices of slavery, and be the means of exercising a sort of unwarrantable coercion over the labour of the negro population. The evils which might have been anticipated, it soon appeared, had actually occurred. No steps were taken to meet the Emancipation Bill and the other measures which followed it. The gaols and houses of correction were left under the management of the local magistrates; no peculiar precautions were taken, and there speedily arose a state of things which excited the greatest attention in this country, and obviously called for the interference of Parliament and the Government. Accounts reached this country of apprentices committed by the special magistrates, who then were under the exclusive control of the local authorities. They were treated in those gaols in so cruel and barbarous a manner, that it was quite obvious some of the worst and most disgusting features of slavery were still preserved in an aggravated form, because the atrocities to which he alluded, were committed beyond the reach of public observation, within the secresy of a gaol or house of correction. He referred most unwillingly to details, but they constituted an important part of the case he had to make out. The right hon. Gentleman then read the following extract:—"On the 12th of April, 1835, the governor reported the cases of two female apprentices, who had been flogged in the Kingston workhouse; and on the 7th of July, 1835, he states, that the Colonial Gaol Act of 1834 authorised the common council, or five magistrates in session, to pass rules.' He also adds, 'they have passed rules authorising the supervisor of workhouses to inflict corporal punishment on all persons, not even excluding females; they have also adopted the custom of cutting off the hair of all the females who are sent into the houses of correction for confinement or for punishment; they have, in some instances, put untried people to hard labour, and cut off their hair.' The following was an extract of an affidavit on oath of Charles Atherton (enclosed by the Governor):—'He saw two drivers flog a woman who was working on the wheel about her head and about her waist, one driver being on the mill steps, and the other on the ground, and both flogging the woman at the same time.' . . 'The supervisor was present.'" The supervisor, in that case, was dismissed; and it was right he should state, that in some of the other cases to which he should allude, the persons committing the offences had been brought to punishment; still he was entitled to refer to them for the purpose of showing what did take place in those prisons and houses of correction, and the vicious system under which they had been managed. On the 29th of August, 1835, Lord Glenelg, in reply, adverted to the indecorum and injustice of scourging or cutting the hair off women for any imputed or real misconduct. The Governor was instructed to apply to the Assembly to amend the Act; and it was added, that if such practices should be continued under the sanction of any colonial enactment, the Government would feel it their duty to apply to Parliament. On the 17th of December, 1835, Lord Sligo, in obedience to these instructions, sent a message to the Assembly, suggesting important amendments in the Gaol Act, and calling especial attention to the fact, that women were flogged on the treadmill. This message was referred to a special committee; but no amendment bill was passed. "March 5, 1836, the Governor reported the result of the inquiry into transactions at the St. Andrew's workhouse. He says:—'It proves that I have not lightly made the charge of corporal punishment of females being still, in spite of all my efforts, administered in the different workhouses of this parish. St. Andrew's, now reported, makes the sixth instance that I had proved.' March 30, 1836, the governor refers to the conviction of the supervisor of Trelawny for flogging Jane Reid, and adds: 'That the punishment by the cat, of women who will not work, on the treadmill, was become so general, that, in his opinion, an example should be made.' April 9, 1836, the Governor reported evidence on the inquest of Luise Beveridge, who died at the treadmill at Morant Bay, after having been tied upon the treadmill, together with four other females. Verdict, 'Apoplexy, occasioned by excitement.' On the 11th of June, 1836, Lord Glenelg observed, that it appeared, from his evidence, that in the Morant Bay workhouse the women who refused to work at the treadmill were fastened to it by ligatures round the arms for twenty-four successive hours in such a manner as to endanger the lives of all, and actually to occasion the death of one. And in reference to the same workhouse on the 31st of August, 1836, he observes, that it appeared, that 'Out of eleven deaths in that workhouse on which inquests had been held since January, 1835, three were confessedly owing to injuries received on the treadmill, and eight were ascribed to the visitation of God, under which general description it was obvious, that many cases may have been included in which the death of the prisoner was not unconnected with the treatment which he had previously undergone.' On the 25th of April, 1836, the Governor reported evidence of cruelties committed in the St. Andrew's workhouse by flogging and otherwise ill-treating Jane Retford. On the 13th of June, 1836, the Governor reports a message sent by him to the Assembly, stating particulars of several cases of whipping of females in the workhouses. On the 7th of June, 1836, the Governor says, in reference to flogging females—'I am sorry to say, that recent inquiries have shown to me that this illegal practice has not ceased.' On the 23rd of June. 1836, the Governor observes, that 'The extent to which the flogging of women had been carried in St. Anne's parish, without his knowledge, exceeded far all calculation.' June 14, 1836, in reference to the cases of Jane Reid and Frederick Shrieves, Lord Glenelg said, he hoped that "an instance of such scandalous abuse would lead to a general reformation in the management of workhouses and other places of confinement," and he directed a special application to be made to the Assembly. June 28, 1836, in reference to the cases of supervisor Whiteman and Nelson, charged with flogging female apprentices in the workhouse of Halfway-tree (in these cases the grand jury threw out the indictments, but the depositions proved the charges), Lord Glenelg observed, that 'if the law really authorised the flogging of females on the treadmill, there was the most urgent cause for the interference of the Legislature.' August 1, 1836, in reference to his instructions from home to endeavour to procure a remedy to the deficiencies in the law for preventing cruelties in workhouses, &c., Lord Sligo says: 'I again say, advisedly, the remedy must come from home.' March 13, 1837, the Governor reported a message sent by him to the Assembly on the 22d of February, 1837, calling the attention of the Assembly to this subject. This message was referred to a special committee, which reported to the effect, that the existing laws were sufficient to prevent abuses. Nothing, therefore, was done. July 1, 1837, Lord Glenelg says:—"I have already had occasion to advert more than once to the abuses alleged to exist in these places (gaols and workhouses), and I have intimated an opinion, that unless some remedy should be applied to them, it might be necessary for the stipendiary magistrates to abstain from committing apprentices to the workhouse.' About this time a Select Committee of that House was appointed to investigate the whole working of the apprenticeship system in the West Indies; and Lord Glenelg, on the 1st of August, 1837, sent out their report, in which they recommended a strict and searching examination, without delay, into the state of the gaols and workhouses, with special reference to the use of the treadmill. Captain Pringle was at the same time employed to make those inquiries on the spot, and report to the Government, and his appointment was announced to the Governor of Jamaica on the 25th of August, 1837. October 27, 1837, a despatch from the Secretary of State, dated May 31, 1837, was laid before the Assembly, reviewing at length the provisions of the Gaol Act of 1834, and urging various alterations and amendments. This message was referred, as before, to a special committee, and no further proceedings were taken. November 15, 1837, Lord Glenelg again called the Governor's attention to the many fruitless applications which had been made to the House of Assembly to amend the oppressive provisions of the Gaol Act, and other local laws. November 28, 1837, the Governor sent a message to the Assembly, submitting some proposed regulations for treadmill punishments. It was referred to the same committee as before, and shared the fate of the preceding applications. February 1, 1838, with reference to the investigation into the statement of James Williams, Lord Glenelg, alluding to the abuses, flogging of females, use of chains, and other cruelties, "which had been brought to light by this investigation,' observed, that he 'found abundant evidence in the papers before him to justify the adoption of the most effectual means of placing the houses of correction under a more efficient control; . . . . and to provide against the recurrence of such enormous abuses.' February 13, 1838, Lord Glenelg says:—'I apprised you that it was my intention to address you in a separate despatch on the subject of the requisite measures for the immediate prevention of abuses of a flagrant character in the houses of correction. It would be a great satisfaction to me to learn that a law of this nature were passed by the colonial legislature; but should this not be the case, there is no subject which, in my opinion more imperatively demands the interference of the Imperial Legislature.' Feb. 21, 1838, the Assembly was again solicited by message to entertain the question of prison discipline, and a further despatch was laid before it, with exactly the same result as before—reference to a committee, without further proceedings." A bill was introduced into that House at the commencement of last Session, known by the name of the Emancipation Act Amendment Bill. A controversy had gone on between the House of Assembly and the Colonial-office, not only with regard to prison discipline, but with respect to other matters; and the Government at home having repeatedly, but without effect, urged the Assembly to make such amendments as might be necessary to remedy the evils complained of, at last determined to come to Parliament, and they proposed the Act which he had mentioned. He would not refer to any of the other important topics contained in that Act; he only begged the House to recollect that it was not merely with respect to prison discipline that it had been found necessary to interfere. Among other matters the Act embraced the regulation of gaols and workhouses in Jamaica; but from the nature of the remedy then provided all the enactments in it applied exclusively to the system of apprenticeship, and only enabled the local executive government, the governor, and special magistrates to protect the apprentices in the gaols and houses of correction; it expired and became of no effect the moment the system of apprenticeship was abolished. The importance of this fact would appear from what he should have to state presently. Meanwhile, shortly after that bill passed, great excitement, which the House would recollect, arose with respect to the working of the apprenticeship, and Parliament was called on to put an end at once to the system. The House refused to do so; and he for one, without now entering upon the subject, must be allowed to say, he should always rejoice the House had refused to adopt that measure. But in refusing to accede to the proposal then made of terminating at once the system of apprenticeship, the House expressed an opinion of its own. He held in his hand two resolutions which were moved by his hon. and learned Friend the Judge-Advocate (Sir G. Grey), who then represented the Colonial-office in that House; and while the first declared their determination to adhere to what might be considered their pledge to the West Indians not to bring the apprenticeship system to a violent termination; the second was in these words—

> "Resolved, that this House declares its opinion that no means shall be omitted tending to secure to the negroes the privileges to which they are entitled under the Act for the abolition of slavery, and under the amendment of the Slavery Abolition Act; and, further, that the anxious attention of this House shall be directed to the state of the negro population when the expiration of the term of apprenticeship entitles them to entire freedom."

He had thought it necessary to read that resolution to the House, not thinking that a pledge so solemn and so recently given could have escaped the memory of any one of its Members, but because he felt, if the present state of the dispute with Jamaica were looked into, it would be found that not only on the single point of prison discipline, but with reference to the other concerns of the province, all right of interference whatever was denied to the Imperial Parliament. It was only in July, 1838, that the report of Captain Pringle was transmitted to the Government at home. Now let the House recollect the condition in which the Government was placed as soon as it received that document. He had already stated to the House that there in the first place the most shocking abuses committed in the workhouses, gaols, and houses of correction, in Jamaica; that there had been five distinct applications made by the Imperial Parliament to the House of Assembly in Jamaica to correct them, and that five times had those applications been, he would not say refused, but intentionally evaded. He must remind the House of what had been the consequence of the Act abolishing the apprenticeship system. All the protection provided by the Emancipation Act for the labourers in the workhouses and gaols was provided for them *eo nomine* as apprentices. As soon, therefore, as the apprentice became a freeman, there was no security against his being committed to the house of correction under the vagrant law, and against his being treated when there as he had been formerly treated when a slave, without any power on the part of the executive government to interfere on his behalf. This was the position in which the Government at home was placed. It had already had abundant proof of the indisposition of the House of Assembly to entertain the subject. It had abundant knowledge of the practical cruelty which had existed in the gaols and houses of correction, and which would continue to exist there, if no remedy were applied to it. It found that the case was urgent and admitted not of delay. There had been a solemn resolution of the House of Commons, that it would direct its attention to the amelioration of the condition of the negro population after their freedom was accomplished. Under such circumstances, the Government would have deserved the severest censure had it hesitated as to the course which it had to pursue. The question of the Prison Bill was introduced into the House of Lords in July last by his noble Friend Lord Glenelg. On its first introduction there, it passed unanimously, but not without observation by their Lordships. A distinguished nobleman, one of the late colleagues in office of the right hon. Baronet, the Member for Tamworth, who had paid great attention to colonial affairs—he meant Lord Ellenborough—said, that he had read the bill through, and approved of it. The bill, in consequence, passed through the Lords, and came down to the Commons. His right hon. and learned Friend, the Judge-Advocate, had moved it in that House. He moved it at an early period of the Session. It passed, not indeed entirely *sub silentio*, but still it passed unanimously. It might be said, however, that it did not attract the attention of the gentlemen connected with Jamaica, and that it met, in consequence, with no opposition. But how stood the fact? Mr. Burge, the agent for Jamaica, with that zeal for his constituents which so honourably distinguished him, sent into the Colonial-office a written protest against the bill. A copy of that protest was moved for by the present Duke of Buckingham, then Marquess of Chandos, and on his motion it was laid upon their Table. The noble Marquess was in his place in the House when his right hon. and learned Friend moved the bill, as was also the hon. Member for Newark, as well as other hon. Members connected with the West India interest. He mentioned these matters to show that the bill had attracted, and must have attracted, their attention; but that no one opposed it in any manner. He was not aware that he had any need to say more of the immediate cause of controversy between the House of Assembly in Jamaica, and the Imperial Parliament of Great Britain. He would, however, say again, that if on reconsideration the House of Commons should be of opinion that it had acted hastily and unadvisedly, God forbid that he should set up its recorded vote as a deliberate resolution from which they could not under any circumstances recede. He had, however, a right to ask the House not to come to such a retraction of opinion without due and solemn consideration. He had already stated, that this Prison Bill was only one of the points on which the collision between the Colonial Assembly and the Imperial Parliament had arisen. He could only consider it, however, as part of the controversy which had long existed between them respecting the general treatment and condition of the negro population. When he looked back to the whole course of events from the year 1822, when the House of Commons passed the celebrated resolution, that it looked forward to the termination of slavery, and that it would take measures to accelerate that event, he could not doubt, no man could doubt, that from that time a controversy had existed between the Imperial Parliament of Great Britain on the one hand, and the House of Assembly of Jamaica on the other. It was not his intention to go back into the details of that controversy; but this he must be permitted to remark, that there was no one act which we had taken for the accomplishment of our objects which had not been forced upon the House of Assembly in Jamaica by the Imperial Parliament, with the exception of the bill substituting the apprenticeship system in the stead of slavery to which they had been induced to consent by the noble sacrifice which the people of this country had made for the accomplishment of that great object. Since that period we had been obliged to interfere no less than three distinct times with the legislation of the colony. 1. When we extended the duration of the Aid Act for one year longer; 2, when we passed the Apprenticeship Amendment Bill; and 3, when we passed the Prison Bill. He was unwilling to weary the House with extracts from speeches and documents in proof of what he had just said; but there was one document to which he must really be permitted to call their attention, as it was so illustrative of the tone and temper with which the House of Assembly was accustomed to act. He alluded to a protest which had been drawn up by the House of Assembly on the second interference of the Imperial Parliament for the purpose of carrying the Act for the amendment of the apprenticeship system. On receiving that Act the House of Assembly passed a solemn protest against it, in which were to be found the following passages:—

"This House does not dread a comparison with the Commons of England in the success of their legislation. Our laws have not been defied, as by the Irish opponents of tithes; murders are not committed in our island by companies of armed men in open day; nor do bands prowl about at night, setting fire to barns, and ricks of corn; nor do our labourers and artisans combine, as of late in Dublin and Glasgow, to raise wages, even by maiming and murder. Our courts are never occupied with the obscenities which disgrace England, nor do our husbands and daughters resort to them to expose their own shame for a money-price. The horrible trade of Burke, (and we fear, of many more), which has given a new word to the English language, was never heard of here; nor have we ever known an instance of parents putting their infant families to death to save them from the protracted sufferings of starvation. It is not in Jamaica that unfortunate mothers outrage nature by the destruction of their new-born offspring, to avoid the cruel persecution of a hard-hearted and destroying morality; nor is it under our laws that wretches commit suicide to escape the refuge which is provided for worn-out and aged industry. We have no corn-laws to add to the wealth of the rich, nor poor-laws to imprison, under pretence of maintaining the poor. We cannot, as the English Parliament does, boast of a pauper law which has taken millions from the necessities of the destitute, to add to the luxuries of the wealthy."

Again, in another passage, this was the language—

"The taxation of the colony may, perhaps, be delegated to the House of Lords, into which was first introduced the infamous bill for our destruction; and, the first time, for many ages, their Lordships in that bill were permitted to exercise the privilege of laying on British subjects grievous pecuniary penalties. The power of taxing Jamaica may console their Lordships for its deprivation elsewhere."

He had read these passages for the purpose of asking the House, whether it believed that a legislative assembly capable of using such language in a deliberate state paper was very likely to pass laws that were wise or impartial, or calculated to soothe irritation and ill-will. He might, perhaps, be told, that however little the present House of Assembly might represent the large body of the people of Jamaica, a short space of time would bring a remedy for it;

that the negro population would speedily acquire the right of suffrage, and, that instead of suspending the constitution of Jamaica, it would be much better for us to trust to the progress of events. It might be true that in the space of fifteen months under the registration law the negro population might acquire a voice in the representation of the island. Indeed, he understood that the facilities for registration were so great there, that many persons were inclined to expect that the negro population would gain a predominant share in the local legislature. Such a prospect afforded no consolation or encouragement to him. He could conceive nothing worse than that the House of Assembly should go on legislating as it now did, and that then at the end of fifteen months it should be succeeded by another chosen as that House would be. Although, from a perusal of the papers upon their Table, he could not but feel the highest gratification at the favourable and excellent moral conduct of the great body of the negro population, still he could not see without apprehension and alarm that population, smarting, as it would do under a sense of injuries inflicted, returning to the House of Assembly persons actuated by their feelings and passions. Looking at all these circumstances, then, he could see no other means of bringing this experiment to a successful issue than that of interposing for some time a body to frame laws for Jamaica, not actuated by the feelings and passions of either portion of the population. The House of Assembly had said, that it would transact no business till our Act of last Session was repealed. No one could suppose it possible to leave Jamaica in its present state. Great part of the legislation depended upon laws passed annually. He held in his hand at that moment a list of seventeen laws, all of which had now expired. Some of them were laws of the very first importance; for instance, there was now no law authorizing the existence of an armed police to execute the orders of the magistrates; there was no law to regulate contracts between workmen and employers which was suitable to the present condition of society in Jamaica; there was now no law to prevent the population from carrying arms; there was now no good vagrant law; there was now no law making a provision for the poor. Besides all this, there was a loss of taxes and supplies amounting to 129,650*l.* a-year, all occasioned by the want of legislation. Not only were these, the old laws of the island, suspended, but also the laws necessary to be enacted for the new state of transition were left in a state of abeyance. Those laws might be classed under seven heads:—first, the laws for the reform of the judicature; secondly, the laws for the regulations of the police; thirdly, the vagrant laws; fourthly, the poor-laws; fifthly, the laws for the repeal of certain colonial judicatures which had formerly sanctioned various acts of oppression; sixthly, the laws relating to the qualification of electors; and seventhly, and lastly, the laws affecting the unauthorized and anomalous occupation of lands belonging to the Crown. On a general review, then, of the whole case, her Majesty's Government were of opinion that it would be advisable to suspend the constitution of Jamaica for a limited number of years, and to provide, that during that interval its legislative functions should not be exercised by a governor, a council, and a House of Assembly, but should reside in the governor and the Council alone. That would be the main purport of the bill which he now asked leave to introduce. Into its other provisions he would abstain from entering until the bill was printed, for then the House would be better able to discuss them. At the same time he must observe, that there were two points of such consequence among them, that even now he must be permitted to advert to them briefly. The first related to the period of time during which this suspension of the constitution was to last, and also the constitution which was to be established in its stead. Government proposed that this system should continue for five years. It was hoped that that period would give time for those laws to be enacted which were necessary for the transition state of that colony. It was hoped also, that that period would produce a calmer mood of mind, in all classes of inhabitants; and when that was produced, the most anxious desire of Government would be to restore to the island of Jamaica its ancient constitution, with such amendments as the changes in its society might render necessary. There was another point of great importance, to which he also wished to advert. It was the intention of Government to add to the present Council of Jamaica a certain number of persons—probably three in number—who would be sent from this country as special councillors. He could not help thinking that great advantage would be derived from the presence of some persons in the Council who were strangers to the passions and prejudices of the colonists, and whose attention had been especially directed to some of the subjects which the Council would be called upon to discuss. When he considered how long such topics as the amelioration of the condition of the negroes, as the Poor-laws, and the state of prison discipline had occupied the attention of Parliament and the public in this country, he could not help thinking that the union of those who brought such knowledge with those who had a local knowledge of the wants, and wishes, and feelings, of the colonial population, would produce a wise, and prudent, and salutary legislation. Such was the outline of the bill which he now asked leave to introduce, and which he trusted would receive the most dispassionate and unbiassed consideration of the House He did not see that there was any occasion for him to address any further observations to the House; and he should, therefore, proceed, after thanking them for the patience with which they had listened to his statements, to move for leave to bring in "a bill to make temporary provision for the government of Jamaica."

Mr. *Goulburn* said, that the right hon. Gentleman opposite had so obscurely shadowed out the details of the measure he proposed to introduce, that however he might feel that an emergency had arisen requiring that some measures should be taken for the better government of an important colony of the empire, he should not avail himself of this opportunity of discussing at large the various important questions touched upon by the right hon. Gentleman. He should, before offering any opinion, prefer seeing in all its details the measure by which the government of the colony was hereafter to be regulated, that he might be enabled to judge how far it was calculated to answer the purposes of wise or useful legislation. But, though he did not mean on the present occasion to offer any opposition to the introduction of this Bill, he must beg leave to reserve to himself the fullest right of discussing all the topics upon which the right hon. Gentleman had entered, and also those which he had avoided—of inquiring, on the one hand, whether there had been an offence in the conduct of the assembly, and on the other hand, how far that conduct might have been occasioned by the policy of the Government in this country. The right hon. Gentleman had said, that this was a contest between the Legislature of Great Britain and that of the colony. In one sense he admitted this was true; but as the right hon. Gentleman had asked him to maintain the supreme power of the British Legislature if the Colonial Legislature should be found to be in the wrong, he (Mr. Goulburn) must in turn call upon the right hon. Gentleman to concede to him that, if it should be found that Government, having obtained the consent of Parliament to a particular measure, had propounded it to the colony in such a way as to excite the passion they saw complained of, at least some opinion should be pronounced on the conduct which Government might have pursued. He did not stand there to defend the conduct of the House of Assembly. He had, in the course of a long acquaintance with colonial governments, found great reason to doubt whether, if he had to establish a system of government for a colonial empire, he should make popular representation its basis. He had himself strenuously resisted proposals made to create colonial assemblies, but he must impress on the House that the question as to the abstract expediency of creating these bodies was widely different from that which was now before them—whether, after having called them into existence and permitted them to continue for a series of years, they should suddenly withdraw them, and substitute a Government of a totally different kind. If they were to canvass the conduct of popular bodies, whether existing in the colonies or in the mother country, they would find some cause of complaint. It belonged to the very essence of popular governments, that they should be from time to time influenced by the passions of those who elected them, and it was one of their evils, as well as one of the good qualities they were supposed to possess, that they faithfully represented the feelings and interests of their constituents. He agreed with the right hon. Gentleman, that, whether the fault were that of the House of Assembly, or of the House of Commons, or the Government, they had come to a point at which they must consider what course it was expedient for them to pursue, but he would no further assent to the proposal of the Government. If it were true that the conduct of the House of Assembly had been so intemperate and improper as it was represented to be by the Government, how did it happen that those who had preceded the right hon. Gentleman in the administration of colonial affairs had, notwithstanding the resistance offered to them, been able to carry measures of infinitely greater importance, infinitely more repugnant to the feelings of Government, than that which the right hon. Gentleman wished to introduce? A measure for the general emancipation of the negroes had been carried through Parliament, which the right hon. Gentleman would not pretend to say was not far more obnoxious both to the constituent and representative bodies in the West Indies. That measure had been carried by operating on their fears through the medium of that House, but it had not been thought necessary to suspend the constitution of any of the West Indian colonies, though many plausible arguments might have been alleged in favour of such a course. It might have been said, that the condition of the whole mass of the slave population was about to be changed, and therefore that it was proper to suspend the constitution, lest the existing authorities should act towards them with partial oppression. No such course, however, had been taken, and the right hon. Gentleman must prove to the House that it was now necessary, in consequence of some proceedings of the House of Assembly, to take a measure to which they had not had recourse when the whole face of society was about to be changed. He thought the right hon. Gentleman's objections to the conduct of the House of Assembly with respect to the regulations of prisons were hardly characterized by fairness. He (Mr. Goulburn) would not assert that there had been a very eager disposition shown on the part of the Assembly to meet the views and wishes of Parliament, but he must say, if Government had felt the question regarding the regulations of prisons to be one of so much importance, they had not shown it by the course they had pursued; they had rather acted in a manner calculated to create in the minds of the colonists the impression that they did not wish for a speedy decision on the subject, and then they had turned to the colonial assemblies and said, "You shall be punished, because you have acted in accordance with our own example of vacillation." The right hon. Gentleman had spoken of individual cases of oppression and abuse brought before the House in 1835, on which the hon. and learned Gentleman opposite (Dr. Lushington) had enlarged with his usual talent and energy, and which had afterwards been submitted to the consideration of the Assembly. The right hon. Gentleman had read what had no doubt been furnished to him as an abstract of the proceedings of the Assembly with regard to these cases, but he was sure that the right hon. Gentleman, though not feeling a very anxious desire to look favourably at their conduct, if he had looked over the details, would not have omitted that most important part of the abstract referring to the declaration of the Assembly in March, 1837. They had then declared that they would be ready to take into their consideration the state of the prisons, with a view to the correction of any abuses that might be proved to exist. It surely was not fair in the right hon. Gentleman, when detailing the conduct of the Assembly, to say that they had rejected the recommendation made to them after they had declared their willingness to take it into consideration. Were there no grounds for thinking that Government were not so anxious as they represented themselves to be regarding this subject? They had had the cases which it was material to consider, before them since 1835; they had been debated in Parliament, and Government ought long since to have made up their minds as to the nature of the cases themselves, and the remedies to be applied to them. To what did Lord Glenelg's communication amount, on the right hon. Gentleman's own showing? Why, in August, 1837, he simply informed the Assembly that he had directed an examination into the state of the several workhouses, in order to ascertain what abuses existed, and what remedies should be applied. Two years after it had become notorious that abuses were prevalent, the Secretary of State informed the Assembly that an inquiry was about to be set on foot in order that Government might have the facts of the case before them. That this was the meaning of Lord Glenelg's communication was placed beyond a doubt by the communication made in October following, when, in recommending to the Assembly the introduction of a better system of prison discipline, he said—"Returns have been required from different parishes in a prepared and condemned shape. The present act will expire in the year 1840, and at that period, if not before, it will devolve upon you to give your most serious consideration to the improvements which may be introduced into it." He did not say, that the noble Lord then at the head of the Colonial Department might not be deeply impressed with the evils existing in the prisons of Jamaica, but if that noble Lord had wished to mislead the Assembly, he could not have chosen a more effectual method than by saying, that he was about to collect information relative to the abuse existing, and that in the year 1840 he should expect remedies to be applied to those abuses. Captain Pringle was accordingly appointed to make inquiry into the state of the gaols in Jamaica, and the House of Assembly had every reason to expect, that his report would be laid before them. Had that ever been done? He knew perfectly well, that the Assembly had manifested every disposition to show deference to the recommendations of the report; they had forborne from proceeding with prisons which were in course of erection, in expectation of receiving it soon, and if Government had wished any further alterations to be made in the law previous to 1840, the Assembly would have readily complied with their request. He contended, that the proceedings of Government had been calculated to mislead the very body of whose conduct they now complained, and he must say, if the Assembly had displayed improper irritation on one side, there had been an equal degree of impropriety and greater negligence on the part of the Government. He would add further, that in dealing with popular assemblies, it was necessary to consider that peculiar sensitiveness entertained by them on the subject of their own rights and privileges. Having created a representative body in Jamaica, they ought to treat it with becoming courtesy. Government had not called together the Assembly to consider the Protection Bill, they had not made it the subject of a special message, they had not even stated, that they wished it enforced in Jamaica. Government ought to have represented to the Assembly, that this measure was a necessary consequence of the general plan of the abolition of slavery, that it was rendered inevitable by the passing of the Emancipation Bill, and therefore, that it was not intended as the prelude to a general assumption of power over the colonial authorities. Government, instead of stating to the colonial Assembly the reasons why they should agree to the measure, had withheld any communication whatever on the subject, and the Assembly only heard of it by seeing the Act posted on the door with the proclamation of the governor for enforcing it. Now, he contended, that Government ought, at all events, to treat the Assembly with the courtesy due to a body deeply interested in the welfare of the country they were called upon to govern, and which ought to subsist between two bodies concurring in the possession of legislative functions. They had, however, adopted quite a different course; therefore, although he was ready to consider with the Government any plan that might be proposed for removing the difficulties that now presented themselves, he should reserve to himself the right of entering at large into the various questions involved in it on some future occasion, and deciding on them after he had heard as well the statements that might be made by the advocates of the Assembly at the Bar of the House, as those which would be made by the right hon. Gentleman on the part of the Government of this country. He had avoided many points which must suggest themselves to the mind in considering this subject. Before suspending the constitution of Jamaica, they ought to consider what feelings would be excited by such a measure, not only in Jamaica, but in other colonies equally sensitive and sharing its peculiarities. The right hon. Gentleman had talked of the feelings of the white population. He would tell the right hon. Gentleman, that though at present there were no means of ascertaining the feelings of the large coloured population lately admitted to the privileges of freemen, they could not rely with confidence on their being uninfluenced by the higher classes, or not likely to share their feelings, with whom alone on the present occasion the right hon. Gentleman supposed he had to contend. He advised the right hon. Gentleman also to reflect on the changes that might be expected to occur in the course of five years, and on the inconveniences that would arise when the Assembly, suspended in consequence of its intemperate conduct, should be called on to resume its functions, the feelings which gave rise to the suspension having been carefully kept alive by continued agitation and excitement, and tending to show themselves in an increased spirit of hostility. As one deeply interested in the prosperity of the colony, he begged the right hon. Gentleman to take these matters seriously into consideration. He trusted, that when the discussion of the question should come on and they had heard the statements and arguments adduced, on behalf of both sides, they would be enabled to come to a decision with calmness and prudence, and adopt a course beneficial to the interests both of the island and the empire.

Sir *G. Grey* said, that notwithstanding the somewhat intemperate attack which had been made by the right hon. Gentleman who had just sat down on the measures which had been adopted by the Government with reference to the negro population of the West India Islands, and more particularly of the island of Jamaica, he most earnestly hoped that this important subject would be discussed, when it came to be fully discussed on the second reading of the bill, with a calm and serious attention on the part of hon. Members to the circumstances which had at length forced on Government the adoption of measures, with reference to the legislature of Jamaica, which they had been earnestly endeavouring for years to avoid. Considering the magnitude of the question, he strongly hoped hon. Gentlemen on the other side of the House would approach the discussion of it with temper and calmness. The right hon. Gentleman, he was sorry to say, had not set the example of moderation on the present occasion. The right hon. Gentleman made it a charge against her Majesty's Government that by a series of unprovoked attacks on the legislature of Jamaica they had at length brought affairs to such a condition as to lead that body to the adoption of measures which, as the right hon. Gentleman admitted, were of such a nature as justified the extreme measure of the suspension of the colonial legislature. The right hon. Gentleman had admitted this, and had led him to conclude that he had no intention of opposing the second reading of the bill, provided that the details turned out to be such as he could approve. ["*No, no.*"] He (Sir G. Grey) certainly understood the right hon. Gentleman to state that he should not oppose the bill; that he wished it to be introduced without discussion; but that he would reserve giving his final opinion upon it till he saw what were to be the details of the measure, and had an opportunity of considering their nature. Assenting, then, as the right hon. Gentleman did, to the introduction of the bill, and deprecating, as he also appeared to do, any discussion of its principle, the right hon. Gentleman must be concluded to admit the necessity which impelled Government to have recourse to it. When the right hon. Gentleman told him that he should reserve his further observations till the time for the full and ample discussion of the measure should come he would reply, that he should then be ready to meet the right hon. Gentleman, and that not by vague references and startling assertions, but upon the evidence of facts. He should be ready, whenever the right hon. Gentleman gave him the titles of the papers on the Table of the House to which he particularly referred, to go into a full and complete examination of those papers if he chose, taking them paragraph by paragraph, for the purpose of showing what the conduct of the Government had really been with regard to the House of Assembly of Jamaica. Some of the facts on which this measure was founded had been known, it was true, to the Government for some time, but it was not true, as the right hon. Gentleman argued, that the Government had been acquainted since the year 1836 with the whole of the facts on which the measure was founded. He had himself, as Under Secretary for the Colonies, been examined at considerable length before the Committee of 1836, when he had stated to the committee every case of the violation of the law in the work-houses of Jamaica which had, up to the time of his examination, been reported to the Colonial Secretary by Lord Sligo. The report of the Committee, which was ordered by the House to be printed on the 13th of August, 1836, after some other remarks, went on thus—

> "Your committee have felt it their duty to institute a strict inquiry into the alleged cases of corporal punishment inflicted on female apprentices. They found that this subject had engaged the close attention both of the local Government of Jamaica, and of the Government in this country, and that measures had been already taken to prevent the recurrence of the violation of that most important enactment, contained alike in the Imperial Act for the abolition of slavery, and in the Jamaica Statute, which prohibits the infliction of corporal punishment on female apprentices. The result of Lord Sligo's inquiry upon this point led to the discovery of many instances of a practice of this nature existing for offences against the discipline of the workhouse in the houses of correction in Jamaica, not under the immediate control of the executive Government, but subject to local regulations and superintendence. Your committee are happy to observe that the legality of this punishment has in no instance been asserted, but that all parties in Jamaica have concurred in its being contrary to the enactments in the Abolition Act before referred to. In several cases prosecutions were instituted against the offender by order of the governor; in one recent case

the party was convicted, and the illegality of the punishment thereby established. As, however, some doubt has been thrown upon the construction which may be placed on the law in this respect, your committee are of opinion that it is essential that such doubt should be effectually removed. The attention of the House of Assembly of Jamaica has been directed to the subject, and as they had distinctly recorded their opinion of the illegality of this mode of punishment, your committee entertain the fullest confidence that they will not fail to take such measures as will prevent the possibility of the continuance of a practice at once contrary to law, and abhorrent to the best feelings of our nature.

In fact, the state of things, as far as the Government were then informed, was such, that he had stated in answer to Mr. Buxton, that he considered the case as by no means hopeless without the immediate interference of Parliament; that he hoped the House of Assembly were sincere in their professions on the subject; and that he was therefore not without confident expectations that all they wanted would be obtained from the Jamaica Legislature. Under these circumstances the committee had refrained from recommending to Parliament any measure on the subject though there was little doubt, that had there been such a recommendation, it would have been adopted. If, therefore, he had to answer to any charge, it was to the charge of having been instrumental in postponing party interference with the legislature of Jamaica; and being so far deceived by appearances and professions as to have relied upon that body for the correction of abuses, which they acknowledged to exist, but which he was more anxious to see corrected through the medium of colonial legislation than to come to Parliament for the means of redressing. He was now obliged to confess that this compliance had been misplaced; for the sake of humanity he sincerely regretted they had not then passed a measure on the subject. He hoped the right hon. Gentleman before the full and ample discussion of this question which he had promised the House, would make himself better acquainted with the facts stated in the papers on the Table; the right hon. Gentleman would again familiarize himself with those documents, for it was clear, that if he had read them before, he had not had them in his recollection when he delivered the speech which the House had just heard. The right hon. Gentleman had quoted an address of the House of Assembly of Jamaica, presented in 1837, in which they stated, that they did not know that any abuses existed in regard to the prisons; and denied their knowledge, or at least belief, of there existing any such extent of evil as to require legislative enactments on the subject. But what was the history of this question? The committee of 1836 received a mass of evidence on this subject, the whole of it was known to the assembly, at the date of that address. The committee had moreover as he before stated, abstained from recommending Parliament to apply the remedy, in the confidence that such remedy would be applied by the colonial legislature. The application for the remedy was but by an assertion of the disbelief of the existence of the evil, notwithstanding the abundant evidence of its frequency, and this is quoted by the right hon. Gentleman, as proof of the readiness of the Assembly to carry out honestly the principle of the Emancipation Act. In 1837 the committee of 1836 was renewed, and took evidence at some length. That evidence was not laid on the Table, because it was conceived to be partial evidence, and that it would be unfair to the West Indian interest to present, in the unfinished state in which the sudden close of the Session unavoidably left it, a mass of evidence involving them in charges of the most revolting kind. However, facts were stated and witnesses heard before the committee, detailing multiplied horrors and atrocities which passed in the prisons and workhouses of Jamaica—horrors and atrocities which certainly very much exceeded anything that had come to the knowledge of the Government. These statements he did not say were true to the full extent, it was not impossible they might be somewhat exaggerated. They had certainly not been entirely borne out by Captain Pringle's report. As a member of that committee he had felt it his duty to give an account of these statements to Lord Glenelg. Lord Glenelg felt that their accuracy ought to be ascertained; and it was consequently determined to send out a competent person to the West Indies to inspect the prisons personally, with a view to inquire into their actual condition, and of course with the ultimate view of applying a remedy to those evils, so far as they should be found to exist. This intention had been carried into effect by the mission of Captain Pringle. While these steps were taken by the Government, what was the course adopted by the committee? They made a short report, which stated, "There is one subject to which the committee consider it to be their duty specially to advert. The state of the workhouses and of the prison discipline is so intimately connected with the working of the apprenticeship system, that it has engaged the anxious attention of the committee, particularly as it exists in the island of Jamaica, to which their inquiries have been principally directed, and it appears to them to be indispensable that there should be instituted, without delay, a strict and searching examination into the state of the workhouses in the West India colonies, and especially into the construction and use of the treadmills which are employed in them, and the nature of the coercion adopted to insure labour among the prisoners. It has been satisfactory to the committee to learn that the attention of the Colonial-office has been directed to this question, and that it is the intention of that department to take effectual means to obtain the information which is required upon it."

In September, 1837, Lord Glenelg's instructions to Captain Pringle were dated, and in July, 1838, Captain Pringle's report was received. He was bound to state, that the report of Captain Pringle did not wholly bear out the charges which had been made. On the other hand, however, it ought to be remembered that that Gentleman was not likely to see anything spoken to by the witnesses who had been examined by the Committee; but he did corroborate their evidence as to the general character of the prison discipline in the island. The report bore out an important fact deposed to by the witnesses—namely, that there were instances of the boatswains in the workhouses being convicts for life, persons wholly unfit to be intrusted with the charge of their fellow prisoners. Upon the whole it was clear that the report laid ample grounds for a total reformation of the prison system. That reformation was, he (Sir G. Grey) was sorry to say, still incomplete, because the chief points referred to in Lord Glenelg's despatch quoted by the right hon. Gentleman require the agency of the Colonial Legislature. Lord Glenelg, in his despatch addressed to Sir Lionel Smith, and dated May 31, 1837, after pointing out a variety of defects in the Gaol Act of the Jamaica Legislature passed in 1834, and adverting to the means which appeared attainable for remedying them, concludes by telling the Governor, that in 1840, which he mentioned, not as an arbitrary period, as the right hon. Gentleman seemed to intimate, but because the Act was limited in its duration to the period then fixed for the termination of the apprenticeship (viz. 1840), when the power of the special magistrates would then be at an end; that in 1840, a change of the system of prisons throughout the colony would be requisite; but if the right hon. Gentleman had read Captain Pringle's report, he would have found that there existed evils for which irrespective of the general improvements recommended in that despatch an immediate remedy was urgently demanded. As he had stated, it had been found that the boatswains attending the treadmills of the workhouses in Jamaica were, in some cases, convicts for life: the prisons also were not of the same kind as those known in this country, but included cells which were subject to no inspection. By the Abolition of Slavery Act Amendment Act, power of inspection and regulation had been given so far only as related to the apprentices. By the abolition of the apprenticeship this power ceased to exist, and the executive Government possessed no means of checking abuses in the prisons to which any member of the emancipated population might be consigned. To meet this difficulty, Captain Pringle recommended that the law in Jamaica should be assimilated to that which was established in Barbadoes, and that the appointment of the officers of prisons should be vested in the governor. Her Majesty's Government had, however, not thought fit to go so far as this; but they proposed, and Parliament had enacted, that if the governor was dissatisfied with the prison officers he might remove them, that notice of such removal should be given to the proper authorities, and on fourteen days elapsing without any substitution being made by the local authorities in room of the individuals removed, then the appointment of fresh officers should be in the governor. The object of the Act was, that they should always be sure of having, not convicts for life, placed in the superintendence of prisons, but that responsible persons might be placed in offices of so much trust and importance. The instructions to the governor accompanying the Gaol Act enjoined him to carry into effect the provision relating to the removal of officers with firmness and decision. Power was also given to the governor to appoint persons to inspect the real state of the prisons, and so enable him to know how the law was actually administered, so that he should no longer have to learn, for the first time, from the evidence of witnesses before a committee of the House of Commons here, what was the state of the prisons in Jamaica, because he had not the means of instituting inquiries on the spot. It is true that the necessity for this measure has been less than was anticipated when it was passed, for he was most happy to say, that crime had so diminished since the abolition of the apprenticeship, not only in Jamaica but in other colonies. That gaols which before were crowded, have since, not only not been full, but in some cases there have not even been inmates enough to perform the ordinary duty of keeping them clean. Gratifying, however, as this fact is, it is one on which the Government could not before hand have relied, so has to discharge them from the obligation of preventing the continuance of abuses such as those which had been proved to exist. But the right hon. Gentleman said, the Government having passed this bill, as he seemed to think, very unnecessarily, next proceeded to promulgate it in Jamaica in a mode which very much extenuated, if it did not justify, the subsequent conduct of the House of Assembly. Had the right hon. Gentleman read the despatch of Lord Glenelg, dated August 13, 1838, transmitting the Act? He wished very much that the right hon. Gentleman would point out any one passage in that despatch which afforded any ground to justify the almost unqualified censure which the right hon. Gentleman insinuated, rather than passed, upon the Government for their management of this matter. These were some of the expressions of Lord Glenelg in that despatch:

> "I am aware that the necessity for such an Act may be much greater in some colonies than in others; and I have no reason to doubt that, in some at least, every disposition will be evinced by the Legislature to correct evils and abuses in their prison discipline and arrangements, which will probably still remain for the local legislature to do, in order to place this subject in a proper position. The Government, however, felt it necessary that an immediate remedy should be applied to such evils as may be removed by the adoption of an uniform system of superintendence and inspection throughout the West Indies. The intervention of Parliament has been the only effectual mode of accomplishing this object. A bill was accordingly introduced, which has been adopted with the unanimous assent of both Houses of Parliament, and has within the last few days received the Royal assent."

The enactment was applicable to all the West Indian colonies alike, although Jamaica was the most pressing case. Ought they, then, to have made application to the colonial legislatures for their separate consent before passing an Act of the Imperial Legislature binding them all? If application had been made to the Legislature of Jamaica, then it must have been made to all the other colonial assemblies. Would the right hon. Gentleman, then, have had them wait till they got the consent of the eighteen other colonies, or would he have wished rather that they should have legislated *seriatim*, and brought in separate bills for each colony? However, it was distinctly stated, that this was a general Act. [Mr. *Goulburn.*—Was it laid before the House of Assembly of Jamaica?] Was the right hon. Gentleman not aware that on three several occasions the House of Assembly refused to receive this Act? He would turn to the despatch containing a report of the proceedings of Sir Lionel Smith on the first meeting of the Legislature after the Act was passed. It was stated that the first notice the members of the Legislature had of this Act was, that they found it pasted on the door of the House of Assembly. By these papers it appears on the contrary, that notice was promulgated and circulated for six weeks previously in the colony; and yet the right hon. Gentleman, by way of swelling the catalogue of offences against the Government, would lead the House to suppose that Sir Lionel Smith had purposely abstained from communicating this Act to them. Such an insinuation was without foundation; the Act was promulgated six weeks before the meeting of the Legislature; and on the meeting of the Legislature Sir Lionel Smith stated, "many important measures necessary on the recent change in our social system demand your calm and dispassionate consideration." Upon their meeting again after the prorogation—and he begged attention to this in answer to the right hon. Gentleman's observation—Sir Lionel Smith stated that it would be his duty to lay before them papers explanatory of the measures of the Government, and conveying her Majesty's recommendation that provision should be made for the introduction of several measures of great interest to all classes of her Majesty's subjects. This was among the despatches; and there was another passage in which he distinctly stated, that there were various despatches from Her Majesty's Government which he should lose no time in laying before the House of Assembly.—[*Cheers.*] He really did not understand hon. Members. The complaint made was, that this bill and the despatch which accompanied it were not laid before the House of Assembly. It was not usual on the opening of the Session, for despatches to be laid before the House. He was not aware of a single instance in an opening speech of despatches being laid before the Legislature. The custom was generally to state that there were important communications to lay before the House, and two or three days afterwards to lay before it the despatches or communications by message. In this instance it was made a complaint against Sir Lionel Smith that these despatches were not communicated to the House of Assembly at its opening. His answer was, that no opportunity was afforded to Sir Lionel Smith to lay these despatches before the House of Assembly, owing to their refusal to enter on any general business. He was not aware that there were any other topics with which he need trouble the House, as there would be other opportunities for this subject to be discussed; but he was anxious to have an opportunity of stating, that in his opinion if the Government were liable to any charge at all, it was to the charge of too great forbearance. In his conscience he stood acquitted of not having done anything hastily. He should have been inexcusable if after having been a party to induce the committee to abstain from any recommendation of party interference. If after five years' experience of the fruitlessness of all recommendations to the House of Assembly on this subject—looking at the spirit with which they had received the Slavery Abolition Act Amendment Act, which had received the unanimous assent of that House—he could have recommended them to have waited for the result of another application to the Legislature of Jamaica. He deeply regretted that they were now compelled to suspend the functions of the Legislature of Jamaica, because they would not adopt the spirit of the British Parliament in carrying out the Emancipation Act which rendered interference was necessary to give effect to the resolution unanimously adopted by this House in the course of last Session, by which we were pledged to watch over the rights of the emancipated negroes. In accordance with the spirit of this pledge, ministers had felt bound to ask from Parliament, and Parliament had given the power to the local Government, by the West India Prison Act, to dismiss improper persons from offices which they abused in the prisons, a power indispensably necessary to the due discharge of the responsibility with which the Government was intrusted.

Mr. *W. E. Gladstone* said, that his principal object in rising was to guard himself against the assumption which the right hon. Member who had just sat down was inclined to make on behalf of Gentlemen on that (the Opposition) side of the House, that in the introduction of the Bill it was intended to wave every other consideration but that which had reference to its details. On the contrary, what he intended was this, that in the existing state of Jamaica it was clear that they were putting an end to the Legislature of the island, and it was necessary for public order to have some legislation, and they were bound to ascertain what the provisions of the measure were. A case had arisen in which it was necessary for some new steps to be taken; but whether by the Imperial Parliament, or the executive Government, was a question which he should wish to reserve for future consideration. The right hon. Gentleman who had just sat down had bestowed the whole of his attention on the first act of last Session of the Jamaica House of Assembly; but he did not give attention to the most important part; there was a link wanting. It might be true, that in the despatches there were grounds requiring the enactment of some measure regarding prisons. But what was the next question? It was undoubtedly whether time were left to the Legislature to act upon the evidence laid before it. Why, until the report of Captain Pringle was laid before the House of Assembly of Jamaica, he would not say the Assembly was not ripe for legislation, but until the report was laid before the Assembly, the Government of this country was not in a condition to say to the Assembly, "You are prepared to proceed to legislate." His hon. Friend cheered loudly when it was stated that this Report was not laid before the Assembly. How was it possible to say to the Assembly of Jamaica, "We will suspend your powers because you will not legislate on the subject of prisons," when the Government itself thought it necessary to institute an inquiry into the state of prisons, and when the results of that inquiry were not in the possession of the House of Commons, nor in the possession of the colonial legislature? He was not prepared to affirm that the act for the regulation of prisons was justified by the necessity of the case; but suppose it was—supposing every one of these questions put, still the right hon. Gentleman the Under Secretary for the colonies did not think it necessary to prove, but assumed, that the question then before the House was either the repeal of the Prison Act, or the passing of the present Bill. It might be so, but it was not in the papers before the House. He was prepared to admit that if the Assembly of Jamaica had, *in totidem verbis*, demanded that the Imperial Parliament should retrace its steps, the case would be very different. Nearly the whole of the dilemma in which we were involved might, as it appeared to him, have been avoided by a more prudent and wary conduct. He (Mr. H. Gladstone) did most earnestly beg of the right hon. Gentleman that he would give to the particular part of the subject which he had now pointed out some further consideration. It appeared to have entirely escaped his view. Let him refer the right hon. Gentleman to the fourth resolution in the 154th page of the papers laid before them. [Sir *G. Grey.*—Read the first resolution]. The first resolution was, that "the Act for the better Government of Prisons in the West Indies" ought not to have the force of law in the island. [Sir *G. Grey.*—But read it]. That was the effect of it. Now he came to the fourth resolution:—

> "Therefore, that in the opinion of this House, they will best consult their own honour, the rights of their constituents, and the peace and well-being of the colony, by abstaining from the exercise of any legislative function, excepting such as may be necessary to preserve inviolate the faith of the island with the public creditor, until her Most Gracious Majesty's pleasure shall be made known, whether her subjects of Jamaica, now happily all in a state of freedom, are henceforth to be treated as subjects with the power of making laws, as hitherto, for their own government, or whether they are to be treated as a conquered colony, and governed by Parliamentary legislation, orders in Council, or, as in the case of the late amended Abolition Act, by investing the governor of the island with the arbitrary power of issuing proclamations having the force of law over the lives and properties of the people."

Neither of these passages which the Assembly of Jamaica had sent forth, made a demand on that House for the repeal of the Prison Act. They did not state that they would decline the resumption of their duties. The legislature of Jamaica had undoubtedly propounded a certain condition as essential to the resumption of their functions. Now, the question before them was, what was that condition; and was that condition the repeal of the Prison Act? They were to be bound by their own words. The proposition before them was, to suspend their legislative functions. In order to justify them in entertaining that proposition, they must have before them a definite issue, and they must have before them the terms on which they would resume their legislative functions. They had not demanded the repeal of the Prison Act. If the right hon. Gentleman could show that they had made that demand, the case would be altered; but until he was able to show that something more than a mere point of honour was at issue, that there was some graver reason, he should have some serious doubts as to the propriety of passing this Bill, and should not be surprised if it were possible to find the secret of the evils without the intervention of that measure.

Mr. *Godson* objected to the inference, that the principle of the bill was conceded by permitting it to be laid upon the Table in order to judge of its details. The right hon. Gentleman had called upon the House for its sympathy in consequence of being obliged to suspend the functions of the Jamaica House of Assembly. He thought, that the Government might be very much in want of sympathy from the position in which they were placed, but he was prepared to show, that the position which they now held with respect to the Legislature of Jamaica was the result of their own conduct. The fault lay with her Majesty's Government and not with the Legislature of Jamaica. The House of Assembly had demanded repose as they termed it, without further parliamentary surveillance after a former act, but that repose had not been granted to them—they had not obtained that repose which was necessary for the good and efficient Government of the island. The Assembly had been told by the Governor, that their conduct merited the approbation of the Government, and that commendation reached the Parliament of this country on the very same day that Captain Pringle's report arrived. Yet, notwithstanding that testimony in their favour, notwithstanding they had shortly before passed an act for the abolition of negro slavery, and notwithstanding they had before passed several laws upon the subject of prisons, it was now proposed without any proceeding upon their part to justify it, to deprive them of their power as a legislative body for the period of five years. Who, he would ask, was to raise the taxes of the island of Jamaica, amounting to half a million, during those five years. Were they to be raised by the council and commissioners which it had been proposed to appoint? Was that a proposition for which the Government deserved support? Was it justice to Jamaica to raise such an amount of taxes without any legislative body in the island. Upon what grounds did they propose to inflict that injustice upon Jamaica? Because they had not adopted a bill upon which they had not been consulted. He had no doubt, if the bill had been sent to Jamaica as an instruction, it would have been received in a very different manner. After the passing of the bill, at least in a very short time, who could tell whether it would be black or white persons who would form the majority of those in prison. It was quite evident, that the Government were anxious for an excuse to abolish the House of Assembly of Jamaica. When the second reading of the bill was proposed he should be able to show, that the House of Assembly of Jamaica had shown perfect good faith with respect to prisons. They had passed the 5th of William 4th, and they had voted 42,000*l.* for the purposes of prisons, They had appointed a select committee to prepare a bill with reference to this subject, and a gentleman of colour, a very able and intelligent man, was actually engaged in drawing up this bill, at the time that the Prisons Act passed by the Imperial Parliament arrived in the island. He could not help condemning the eagerness with which the Government passed that act, nearly at the end of the Session, and at a time when there were few Members in town; and with the same eagerness as soon as the act was passed, they sent it out to the island of Jamaica and had it proclaimed as law throughout the island. He challenged the law officers of the Crown to show an instance in which this had been done before; he challenged them to point out an instance in which the Imperial Parliament had passed a law to provide for the internal regulation of Jamaica. The act of slave emancipation had been carried into effect by an act of the Legislature of Jamaica, in which that act was recited. The same was the case with respect to the act in aid, so that these instances could not be cited. He admitted, that the House of Assembly would not consent to submit to the act of last session. They said that sooner than submit to the grinding tyranny of that bill they would abolish the apprenticeship altogether. Never was there anything equal in tyranny to that act of Parliament. Before the second reading of the bill now before the House he should have to present a petition from the merchants and planters of Jamaica, praying to be heard at the bar of the House against this bill; and on that occasion the subject would be more fully discussed. It appeared to him that the conduct of the Government had been precipitate, and he could not avoid condemning the Governor as having acted with precipitancy and want of forbearance. When the Governor found, that the House of Assembly objected to carry into effect a particular measure, was it not his duty to let the Assembly proceed with the disposal of the other business before it and to send home for instructions as to how he should act with respect to the Prisons Bill? He would not further trespass on the House at present, but would protest in the strongest manner against a measure which would allow the island of Jamaica to be taxed to the extent of half a million a year by a governor aided by nine councillors, and three commissioners to be sent out from this country.

Sir *R. Peel* said, I wish, Sir, before the question is put, to make a few observations with respect to the subject before the House, and the principles that appear to me to be involved in the course which the right hon. Gentleman calls upon us to adopt. In the opinions I am about to offer to the House, I do not wish to be understood as approving of the course which has been pursued by the House of Assembly of Jamaica. I do not appear as the advocate of one party or the other, but whilst I cannot approve of what has been done by the House of Assembly of Jamaica, I am still less inclined to approve of the course that has been taken in reference to these transactions by her Majesty's Government. At the same time, I feel the difficulty of the situation in which we are placed, and the necessity of adopting some course to remedy that difficulty as well as the circumstances out of which it has arisen. But, Sir, when I consider the steps which have led to that necessity, though I admit, that there is blame to be imputed to the House of Assembly of Jamaica, it appears to me that a far greater amount of blame is to be attributed to the course which has been adopted by her Majesty's Government. I have already stated, that I am no advocate for the House of

Assembly of Jamaica. I do not want to defend, on the contrary, I condemn, the proceedings they have adopted. I regret, that they did not lend themselves cordially to carrying out the great measure of slave emancipation in the spirit in which it was enacted, and carry forward those measures which were considered requisite for the interests of the apprentices, and to render effectual the abolition of slavery. Nay, more, I think that the people of England had a right to insist, that the interests of the emancipated negro should be protected, and that they had furthermore a right to require in every instance that no law should be passed by the House of Assembly at variance with the spirit of that great act of Parliament which had been passed by this country for the emancipation of the slave population, and the complete fulfilment of which this country ought to demand as an equivalent for the liberal and extraordinary sacrifice of the sum of 20,000,000*l.* as compensation to those whose interests would be injuriously affected by the great change. I repeat, that I am not satisfied with the spirit in which the House of Assembly of Jamaica entered upon regulations for the purpose of carrying this act into operation. But whilst I make this admission, I cannot at the same time disguise from myself the fact that the course proposed by the right hon. Gentleman involves the most important consequences, which I cannot avoid looking at. I do not, I confess, clearly understand the consistency of the grounds on which the Government came forward to ask our concurrence in this measure. I could easily understand her Majesty's Government coming forward and asking us to dissolve the constitution of Jamaica on the ground that they considered a popular form of Government not exactly suited to a colonial dependency. They might ask us to abrogate the constitution on that ground. I could understand them to come forward on another ground, and to say, that, after the steps taken for the emancipation of the negro population, it was necessary to suspend a popular Government for some time, as preliminary to carrying into effect the measure of emancipation. Coming forward on these grounds, would be intelligible. But instead of this, the right hon. Gentleman says, that so far from considering the abolition of the constitution of Jamaica as an advantage, he considered it a disadvantage, that it is a course which the Government has been induced to adopt with great reluctance, and which he admits he considers to be positively injurious. Now, if I had not this declaration of the right hon. Gentleman I should be inclined to infer from the correspondence that has been laid before the House that the Government were glad of an opportunity to get rid of the House of Assembly of Jamaica. The first question we have to consider is whether anything has passed on the part of the House of Assembly to justify Parliament in the abolition of the constitution of Jamaica, and whether there is not some other course open to us without having recourse to so severe and extreme a measure. It is easy to point out the evils that arise from the present state of things; but in considering those, let us not close our eyes to the evils that are likely to arise if we adopt the course that has been proposed to us. Here we have an important colony, which from the earliest period of its history has been in the enjoyment of a free system of Government. You propose in this hitherto free colony to suspend the popular form of Government which now prevails there, and after a short period of suspension you propose that that form of free Government is to be revived. But is that so easy to be accomplished? Supposing that you carry into effect what you propose, are you sure, that the transition is so easy? Her Majesty's Government propose to abolish the House of Assembly, and to substitute in its stead a Governor, a council, to be appointed by the Crown, and three salaried commissioners. Now, what is the sum with which these individuals will have the power of imposing as taxes on the island? Why, not less than half a million. The sum raised at present in the shape of taxation is not less than 400,000*l.*, and I do not think, that they will be able to carry the New Prisons Act into effect without increasing the taxation, so that the amount to be raised by this new authority will amount at least to half a million. The proposal of her Majesty's Government, then, is this, that the island of Jamaica should be subject with respect to taxation, to a Governor, nine Councillors, and three salaried Commissioners. Now, at the same time, that her Majesty's Government make this proposal to subject Jamaica in respect to taxation to an arbitrary power, what do we find in the report of their commissioner to Canada? Lord Durham in his report on Canada states that your system of colonial Government there is altogether wrong for that you ought to make the executive officers responsible to the control of the popular assembly. Lord Durham does not say, that the executive officers should be responsible to the Crown, or to her Majesty's Government at home, but to the popular assembly of the colony. How will the people of Jamaica feel when they read this opinion put forward in the report of Lord Durham, your commissioner to Canada, and at the same time, know that a bill is brought in not making the executive officers responsible to the House of Assembly, but abolishing representation altogether, and vesting the executive power in the hands of arbitrary officers. This course might become inevitable, but we can only consent to adopt it when you shall have convinced us that there is no other alternative left us to pursue. Let me ask you, before you adopt this course, have you well considered what will be the probable effects of your persevering in it? Is there any man sincerely anxious for the success of the great experiment of slave emancipation who is not at the same time desirous to conciliate the other slave-holding States into following the example set by this country? Ought it not to be an object with those desirous of the complete abolition of slavery to conciliate the slave-holding portion of the United States into an adoption of your experiment? But how will you do this if you pass this measure? How will you conciliate the United States into the imitation of your example, if you tell them that the emancipation of the negro is incompatible with a popular form of Government? Is it not possible that, if you substitute in Jamaica an arbitrary for a popular form of Government, you will create new obstacles in other places to the emancipation of the slave? But supposing we are driven to this alternative, it is open to us to consider how far the Government may have been the means of driving us to it. We have also to consider, and to consider most maturely, whether we can adopt any alternative besides the abolition of popular Government. If it should appear that the Government, by their precipitancy, gave occasion to the proceedings that had been adopted by the House of Assembly, many serious and important considerations call on you to devise some other remedy for the existing difficulties besides the abolition of the constitution of Jamaica. We must seriously consider how much such a proceeding is calculated to alarm other colonies that possess a popular form of Government. The hon. Member opposite refers to the insolent language used by the House of Assembly as a justification for those proceedings; but surely there cannot be a more dangerous ground for legislation than the use of insolent language by a popular Legislative Assembly. The hon. Member says, "Is it possible for persons who use such language towards the House of Commons of England to be intrusted with legislative powers, and much less with powers to legislate with respect to the emancipated slaves?" But surely this is a most dangerous ground for legislation. It is a most dangerous ground that because insolent and intemperate language has been used, that is to go to furnish part of a justification for the abolition of popular Government in one of the most important of our colonies. I say, that no popular Government could be maintained for an hour if that ground were held to be justifiable. That certainly should never be brought forward as a ground for the abolition of a free constitution. But it is said, that the House of Assembly insisted as a condition that this House should repeal the Prisons Act. It has not been shown that they insist upon any such condition. But certainly the conduct of the Government appears to have been hasty and precipitate. Before you come forward to call upon us to adopt such a measure as this, you should be prepared to show that you had exhausted every remonstrance, and had used every reasonable means in your power to put an end to these differences. If, after this, you came forward and asked Parliament to provide for the difficulties that had arisen—if you could show that the Colonial Legislature demanded of the Imperial Parliament to abandon its new Act—if you could show me this, I would then be prepared to tell the Colonial Legislature, "You are the inferior power, and you must abdicate your functions, since you refuse to exercise them save on terms which it would be disgraceful for the Imperial Parliament to sanction." But I tell her Majesty's Government that they must convince me that they have used every exertion and exhausted every remonstrance unavailingly before I will consent to allow a body of executive officers to tax to the extent of half a million, the inhabitants of a colony hitherto accustomed to have their taxation regulated by a House of Assembly chosen by their own citizens. Admitting that the conduct of the Assembly has been censurable, that their language has been violent and most unwise, was no provocation given them, and ought not some allowance to be made for the circumstances under which that language was made use of? Now, last year, when it was proposed in this House to abolish the remaining term of apprenticeship, you refused. You stated very properly and very justly that the national faith was pledged to the maintenance of the full term, and that independent of that it was better that it should continue, as it would afford time for the mature consideration and preparation of those measures which would be necessary to carry out the complete emancipation of the negro, and to prepare for the change consequent upon the termination of the apprenticeship. This was the language held last year, and yet what did they think of the Governor of Jamaica holding language to the House of Assembly to the effect that, though Parliament had refused to curtail the apprenticeship, yet that they ought to do it themselves? The right hon. Gentleman here quoted some passages from the speech of the Governor to the House of Assembly, and which concluded in these terms: "The peace of Jamaica is in your hands. The colony requires repose from the operations of a law that has been found equally tormenting to the labourer, and disappointing to the planter, and which constrains man in unnatural servitude to man." Though the Government at home said, that the national faith was pledged to the continuance of the apprenticeship, yet when the Governor told them that the peace of the colony required its abolition, what other course had they to pursue? They found the executive authority combined with, perhaps he ought not to say physical force, but with the influence of numbers; and had they any option left them but to do that which the Parliament at home refused to do, and to abolish the remaining period of apprenticeship? It might be right to refuse additional compensation, but I certainly think, that under the circumstances the House of Assembly are entitled to some little indulgence; and even though you do not feel called upon to censure your governor, yet allowance ought to be made for the circumstances in which the House of Assembly were placed. Surely that the House of Assembly used violent language you can consider no sufficient excuse for abolishing the free constitution of that colony. With respect to the measures adopted, I certainly lament the course which the Government have taken. I admit, that I am not satisfied with the manner in which the House of Assembly have acted with respect to prison discipline, I can imagine nothing more objectionable. nothing more to be condemned than sending a man to prison, upon pretence of some breach of order, or as a substitute for inflicting punishment in the field. I certainly think, that more exertions ought to have been made to convince the House of Assembly of the impolicy of the course they adopted. They should have been told that this measure was part of the system for the carrying into effect the measure of emancipation. The Minister should have accompanied this measure by some frank explanation to the House of Assembly, that would have afforded them an opportunity to retrace their steps. But instead of this you left them under the impression, that you would not interfere. What was the language held by Lord Glenelg, in October 1837, when the report of the committee was before you, when you were aware of those complaints and grievous abuses, if you believed the evidence before the committee? The governor called the House of Assembly, and stated, that he had been instructed to communicate to them what were the views of her Majesty's Government with respect to the introduction into the island of an improved system of prison discipline. The governor communicated this despatch to the House of Assembly. The despatch is dated the 27th of October, 1837, and stated that, as the period of negro apprenticeship would expire in 1840, they would be called on to give their most serious consideration to the improvements in prison discipline, that it would be necessary to introduce. Now, this was not calculated to leave the House of Assembly under the impression that they would be interfered with. Well, then, you sent Captain Pringle out to make an inquiry and to report. Captain Pringle's report did not in any way aggravate the case before the committee. But, instead of communicating to the House of Assembly, that the Imperial Parliament would provide for a system of prison discipline, you enabled Captain Pringle to communicate with the House of Assembly on the subject, and he stated to the House of Assembly, that it would be better for them for the present not to grant any land for prisons. This was certainly calculated to leave the Assembly under the impression, that no interference would be resorted to. Well, then, on the 16th of July the report of Captain Pringle was laid on the Table of the House of Lords. No communication whatever was forwarded to the island. At the end of July, towards the end of the Session, the bill was passed, and it was immediately sent to the island. No communication or intimation whatever was given to the House of Assembly, but proclamations were issued, proclaiming the new act as the law. The House of Assembly, I admit, acted unwisely in suspending the exercise of their functions; but then they declared, that they were ready to pass acts for the public credit of the island, to provide for the civil service of the island; and they would have passed those acts if they had been afforded the opportunity. Some of those seventeen acts which they are charged with not having passed they would have passed if they had been allowed to pass them. Why not, then, give the Assembly the opportunity of collecting the taxes? Why not trust to the influence of returning good sense operating upon them to put an end to those differences? I do not by any means seek to justify the House of Assembly. I am not the advocate of any party, but I certainly think, that the House of Assembly, by its want of temper, lost the opportunity of making a case against you. On the whole, I think that allowance ought to be made for any intemperate language or for any violence that may have been displayed. Popular assemblies are jealous when they suppose, that their privileges are invaded, and therefore allowance ought to be made for the circumstances in which the House of Assembly were placed. Whilst I feel the necessity of the case, and whilst I lament the alternative offered, I cannot acquit her Majesty's Government of having contributed to these circumstances by their want of temper, by their neglecting to communicate these proceedings to the House of Assembly, and by their neglect to endeavour to soothe the feelings of men who believed, that they were called on to submit to what they considered an injustice. We should not forget, that these men are Englishmen, accustomed to free institutions. Provided that you do your duty and secure the protection of the slave, which this country has a right to expect after the sacrifice that has been made, but that object being accomplished, some allowance ought to be made, and some course should be adopted that would put an end to these differences without resorting to so severe an alternative. In my opinion the abolition of popular government in Jamaica will only have the effect of alarming all other colonies which possess free government, and it will have still further the effect of preventing the emancipation of the negro in other States, by making it appear that slave emancipation is incompatible with popular government.

Sir *S. Lushington* was one of those who felt the deepest interest in the progress of slave emancipation, and was desirous, that our example should influence other States. But the fears that he felt on the subject were of a different description from those of the right hon. Baronet. He believed, that if they could show, that this measure promoted the wealth and prosperity of the colonists themselves—if they could show that the holders of property felt no deterioration of that property in consequence of the emancipation which had taken place —if they could show, that the inhabitants of these colonies suffered no diminution of wealth or prosperity, that then our example would become a beacon to the United States to guide them to the emancipation of those whom they held in slavery. With respect to the more immediate questions, he felt that it was not on light grounds that the constitution of Jamaica ought to be taken away. He felt, that those who proposed to take from Jamaica a constitution which that island had enjoyed for two hundred years, should show that there was an inevitable necessity to justify such a proceeding, and that the island had not been governed for the happiness of its people. The first and most important consideration was, what was to be done in the existing circumstances? He had heard it stated, that the House of Assembly had not exactly said, that they would not resume their functions unless the Parliament at home abandoned their act. No such thing had been said. But what had been said, and what had been done? Had not the House of Assembly four successive times abdicated their legislative functions? They adhered to that determination and what was it? "We will cease to act until her gracious Majesty shall be pleased to declare in what form we are to be governed, and whether or not the Imperial Parliament is to have any share in legislating for this colony." Now, this was their alternative. Did the House propose, that it should be adopted? Did they propose that the present or any future Government should say, that the Parliament of this country must be obedient to the Jamaica House of Assembly—that they, whose business it was to control the legislature of Jamaica, and, if necessary, to supersede it, and to pass wholesome laws for the government of the community, should emasculate themselves, and decline a duty which he would maintain was a paramount one for the Parliament of Great Britain. The right hon. Gentleman had said, that the House should not be provoked by the intemperate language of the House of Assembly. He agreed with the right hon. Gentleman in that opinion, although certainly coarser or more violent and indecorous language no assembly could use. It was equally insulting to one side of the House as to the other, to that and to the other branch of the Legislature, and tended greatly to exasperate the unpleasant and hostile feeling already existing in this country. He agreed, that it should form no sufficient reason for taking from the Assembly its power; but, on the other hand, it formed no inconsiderable argument for such a temporary suspension of its functions as might be necessary to restore its efficacy. It was no small matter to see this determination to fly in the face of Parliament, and to see the protest which had been so much condemned still adhered to. He must say, that in his opinion, the language of the protest fully justified his right hon. Friend in thinking that the persons who could dictate such language were not the most likely to legislate for the benefit of the colony. Another thing to be considered was, that the protest had been published before the Prisons Bill was in existence. The protest stated, that the freeholders of Jamaica would not send Representatives to a mock Assembly, and that if any taxes were levied they should be collected at the point of the sword. Now, was not the plain English of this, that the planters were determined to refuse to exercise their functions so long as the British Legislature claimed any right to interfere? He did not agree that the colonists were compelled to accept the proposal of immediate abolition made by Sir Lionel Smith. His impression was, that they agreed to it because they did not wish to obey the Act of the British Parliament. Why had that Act been passed? Because the House considered it a part of the original compact, and that it was a measure of right and justice. He would beg the House to consider what was the state of things in the colony at the passing of that Act. He believed, if his memory did not deceive him, that the prisons of Jamaica had been a topic of discussion in the House of Assembly for ten years before, and, that down to that time nothing had been done in the way of reform. But be that as it might, did nothing new take place in July, 1838, to render it imperative on Government to proceed in their legislation without a minute's delay? Mark what these circumstances were. They had obtained an Act of Parliament, which up to 1840 would protect the apprentices; the great mass of the black population were apprentices, and the stipendiary magistrates had been appointed for their protection. By the immediate abolition of the apprenticeship the power of these magistrates ceased, and he left it to the House to consider what would be the state of the apprentices if left for six months without some equivalent protection. He did not intend to harrow the feelings of the House by repeating the horrors of the workhouse of St. Anne's, but it was absolutely necessary that the repetition of such horrors should be prevented. What would the people of England say if in case of any temporary rising or disturbance a population of three hundred thousand persons were left subject to imprisonment in such places? If Lord Glenelg had refused to include Jamaica in his Prisons Bill, he would have incurred a heavy responsibility, for which he would be the first to condemn him. But let them go further into the subject. The right hon. Baronet said, that from the papers produced, it would appear, that Government had itself brought about the present state of things as a pretext for the suspension of the constitution. How could that be with respect to the Prisons Bill? Captain Pringle's report arrived in July, 1838; the bill then went through the Lords, and was returned to Jamaica the 23d of September, in the same year. It was then presented to the House of Assembly, and their resolution bore date the 3d of November. But the Government knew nothing of this—they were totally ignorant until the Assembly published their resolution. It was superabundantly clear that no act of the home Government had promoted the present state of things. But then it might be said, that although Government had done nothing, they might have done something—that the Governor's speech should have conveyed some intimation of the Prisons Bill. He had looked into Sir Lionel Smith's speech, delivered previous to passing the Abolition Act, and, singular enough, it did not in the slightest degree notice that measure. In fact it was not customary for the Governor to allude to measures in his opening speech; but to state that he had despatches to communicate, and he reserved till the opportunity came for laying those despatches before the House to state their contents. Well, then, the bill complained of did as little as it was possible for it to do. It merely gave power to the Governor in Council to make regulations, and the penalty so much complained of, was only 20*l.* in case of refusal or resistance to inspection. That was but a very slight restriction on the power of the House of Assembly, and what was the state of things that called for it? He would ask the right hon. Gentleman opposite, was not the necessity for immediate legislation overpowering? First, there was a necessity for some law regulating the contract between master and servant; and next, to prevent the occupation of land by persons without title. With respect to these two most vital measures, the House of Assembly had abdicated its functions, and the consequences were such as loudly called for a legislative remedy. Then there was the question of the militia. He stated these things merely to show how foolish it would be to refuse or delay legislation in such an emergency. He was afraid, that the right hon Gentleman did not clearly comprehend the state of feeling in the colony. He had been always of opinion, that on emancipation the coloured people would adhere to the high class and desert the blacks, and had been so convinced of this, that when the former applied to him for assistance in 1824 he made it an express stipulation, that if they obtained their freedom they should join in the efforts for the blacks. He told them, that the best case they could make for themselves would be kindness to their black dependents. He hoped the time would yet come when the affairs of the colony might be intrusted to its own legislature; but it had not yet arrived, as the black population placed no confidence in the House of Assembly, but looked to the British Parliament for protection.

Lord *Stanley* should not have risen to address the House but for some observations which had fallen from the hon. and learned Gentleman. He, for the sake of the Government itself—for the sake of the credit of the country—did entertain an earnest hope that, if this bill should pass, her Majesty's Government would be able to satisfy the House and the country that nothing had led to it but such an overwhelming necessity as it was not in their power to control or resist; and that it could not have been avoided by a more conciliatory and temperate line of conduct than that which had been adopted. His right hon. Friend, the late Under Secretary and his right hon. Friend the present Under Secretary for the Colonies, had both most studiously disclaimed any intention hostile to the planters. They repudiated the hint thrown out by his right hon. Friend, the Member for Tamworth, that, looking at the documents and proceedings of Government, it seemed as if Ministers were rather anxious to seize on some pretext for getting rid of a troublesome House of Assembly. It might be well to resist the insinuation if it rested merely with his right hon. Friend, but what said the hon. and learned Gentleman who had just sat down? Did he rest his attack on the late conduct of the House of Assembly? No; he spoke about the brown people, and stated that he had foreseen so far back as 1824 that the House of Assembly, as at present constituted, could do nothing for the benefit of the black population. It was for this reason that the hon. and learned Gentleman was anxious for this bill. The House had to consider two questions with reference to this measure—first, whether the necessity for it was absolute, and that by it alone could the necessary objects be effected; and next, if this necessity did exist, whether Government was not to blame for bringing the colony into such a condition. The hon. and learned Gentleman who had just sat down said that the House of Assembly had no reason for the improvident part taken by it in the Session of 1838.

Sir *S. Lushington*: I said the Assembly had been prorogued by Sir L. Smith.

Lord *Stanley* did not wish to misrepresent the hon. and learned Gentleman, but he had certainly understood him to say that there had been no necessity for the conduct of the Assembly.

Sir *S. Lushington* wished to explain what he really had said. He had stated that the local Legislature passed the Abolition Act, not in consequence of the governor's speech, but in consequence of the Act of the British Parliament.

Lord *Stanley* agreed with the hon. and learned Gentleman so far as to think that the Jamaica Legislature considered itself placed in such a difficulty by the passing of the Act as rendered immediate and total emancipation necessary; but the hon. and learned Member said that there was no compulsion. He begged to call the attention of the House to one or two passages in the governor's speech. The hon. and learned Member had stated that in the speech no mention was made of abolition. He should have liked the speech better if mention had been made of it. He thought a temperate statement should have been made of the extent to which Parliament had interfered, and what was the necessity for that interference. But what did the speech say? Sir Lionel said, "I need not refer you to the agitation going on throughout the empire; an agitation which makes the honourable efforts of Ministers barely sufficient to preserve a law in which the national faith is concerned. I am afraid that parliamentary interference in your affairs is not yet terminated, and as Governor I shall not shrink from stating my conviction that it will be physically impossible to maintain the apprenticeship system much longer with any hope of success. Why, if any one form of language more than another could express compulsion, it was that under which the House of Assembly had passed the Abolition Act. But what he blamed the Government for was this, that until driven to it by public clamour, they had no intention of recommending total abolition in 1838. They were driven to that recommendation, and when driven to it, it was their duty to originate measures to meet the necessities of immediate emancipation. Instead of this they studiously kept the Colonial Legislature unprepared, and when they did call on them to act under such pressure as the language of Sir Lionel Smith shewed, they had none of the measures which ought to have accompanied that call in readiness, although knowing that the ruin of the island would be consequent on their neglect. The hon. and learned Gentleman had spoken of the necessity of originating measures at the time of the Emancipation Act. He (Lord Stanley) would tell the hon. and learned Member that the object of the apprenticeship system was to give time for measures of precaution—to prepare for regulating the contracts between master and servant—to regulate the militia and other important matters. All these measures the House of Assembly had been compelled to neglect by the mode in which it was forced to pass the Abolition Act. Well, the argument of Government was, that such irritation prevailed—such determined manifestations were exhibited by the Legislature of a desire to abdicate their functions, that the present measure had become absolutely necessary. He doubted very much that this was the case; he doubted whether the necessity would have existed if Government had taken the proper steps to prevent it. The hon. and learned Gentleman had spoken of the protest. He (Lord Stanley) granted that nothing could be more indecorous, nothing more violent, than that protest; but he must say, that a great deal of the irritation arose from the circumstance of the Assembly being compelled to pass a law to which they were disinclined. That law had been forced on them in the most vexatious way a law could possibly be pressed on a Legislature. What was the language of the governor? "Jamaica is in your hands; she wants repose, and will acquire it by the passing of this law." What was the answer of the Assembly? "We will pass this law; and we do hope that, having complied with every demand, we shall enjoy the repose we have been promised." In the proceedings which followed this the Government congratulated the Assembly on the measure, and cordially thanked them for the great boon they had conferred on the people. Was not this giving them sufficient reason for thinking they had merited the approval of Government, and fulfilled the intentions of the Legislature? For thinking that they would be left to the promised repose, and to legislate for themselves. In the state of mind produced by this language, the Members of the House of Assembly, returned to their homes, and the first thing they found, after complying with all demands, was another Act containing a worse invasion of their privileges than the former. Moreover, this was not accompanied by any conciliatory dispatch. [Sir *G.*

Grey: there was a despatch.] The first intimation the Assembly had of the Act was the proclamation of the governor, unaccompanied by any conciliatory despatch or any explanation of the grounds on which the British Legislature had based it. To be sure Lord Glenelg sent a dispatch, but the local Legislature were not put into possession of it, and the act was communicated to it in a most offensive manner. The hon. and learned Gentleman had also stated, that it was unusual for Governors to make allusions in their speeches to measures of this kind. If this had been the case in the speech of 1838 it was no reason why the Assembly should not be informed of the second invasion of their privileges. The Governor should certainly have informed them of the intended measure and stated, that there was no desire to interfere further with their privileges than was necessary to secure the great object for which the bill had been brought in, namely, to carry into effect the abolition of negro slavery. He did not know the Governor, but he thought the whole tenour of his despatches, during four years was not at all calculated to soothe an irritated and prejudiced body. There were in them attempts at one little vexation after another, an appearance of taking a partizan view of questions, and of always siding with one party. He should not now enter more fully into the subject, deferring further remarks to a future stage of the bill, but he must object to the mode of making extracts from these despatches adopted by Ministers. Everything unfavourable to the system of apprenticeship was carefully selected; everything that could throw blame on the planter. It was not in human nature, that this should not irritate that body. There was, for instance, the letter of Sir Lionel Smith to Mr. Phillips, the Baptist missionary, dated the 1st of January, in which he stated, that he had made numerous inquiries as to the conduct of the apprentices, and in every case had heard, that where labour was met by fair remuneration and kindness it was to be had in abundance. This was the public declaration of the Governor, and yet, one week after, on the 8th of January, 1839, the same Governor wrote to the Secretary of State for the Colonies, that the disposition to labour, from various causes, was certainly not increasing—that both parties were unreasonable in their demands, and that exorbitant wages and extravagant rents were the consequences of this unsettled state of things. Thus, on the 1st of January the Governor made a statement that wherever fair remuneration for labour was offered it was not found wanting; and on the 8th he sent home a despatch containing a directly contrary statement. He was, therefore, justified in stating, that this was one amongst many instances, to which he could refer, in which it appeared to him that Governor Sir Lionel Smith did seem to have taken a partisan view of the case, and to have set himself against the planters, and become the advocate of the black population; and he did further say, that if the Governor had not been able to do all that he desired, yet, if he had acted on more impartial and conciliatory principles, he might have gone down to the House of Assembly in November; he might have explained to that House what it was that led to the passing of this bill — that there was no intention on the part of the British Parliament to interfere further than necessary with their privileges; and if all this had not been successful, he would at least have thrown upon the Members of the House of Assembly the responsibility of taking the unreasonable course of refusing to legislate at all. But they did not refuse to legislate at all. They did not refuse to provide for the debt, the civil list, and the public services of the colony. They said they would maintain the public faith of the colony, and beyond that their refusal to legislate was not until the Act should be repealed, but until they were informed on what principles it was the intention of the Imperial Parliament to interfere in their internal regulation. Why, then, could not the Secretary of State for the Colonies have written out to Jamaica, and have expressed his regret that the Assembly had taken an erroneous view of the measures adopted by the British Parliament; that it had no intention to interfere with their privileges? This might have been done without departing one whit from the dignity of the Imperial Parliament, and without repealing one iota of the bill; and thus, perhaps, this unfortunate difference might have been terminated, the House of Assembly in Jamaica might have resumed its sittings, and full confidence have been renewed between that colony and the mother country. If that had been done, if every measure of conciliation had been tried to prevail on the Colonial Assembly to carry on the Government, and if all these measures had failed, then he would not deny, but not until that could be proved to him would he admit, that her Majesty's Ministers were justified in coming to the British Parliament and asking them to compel the obedience of a refractory Colonial Assembly by a suspension of their constitution, and depriving them of privileges which they had so long enjoyed. But on every occasion up to this period, we had left them no doubt of their full and unrestrained legislative powers: indeed, we had necessarily left thm no doubt on this point, for we ourselves had vacillated, first naming 1840 as the period when the apprenticeship should terminate, and afterwards recommending that it should terminate in August, 1838. Then we sent over a commission of inquiry into the prisons; the commissioner was desired to report; and the Colonial Assembly were thus led to infer that the report would be laid before them for their guidance, and two days after that report was laid on the Table of the House of Lords, the Prisons Bill was brought in, carried rapidly through both Houses, passed, and sent over to the Governor of Jamaica before any communication had been had with the agent for the colony or with the Assembly, and without giving the Assembly the least opportunity of declaring how much of that report they were inclined voluntarily to adopt. He had entered more at length into this subject than he intended to have done in the present stage, and he would detain the House no longer. Although he for one should not oppose the introduction of the present measure, yet he was far from being satisfied by what had passed to-night that her Majesty's Government were free from blame for the course hitherto pursued with regard to the colony of Jamaica. Still less was he at this moment satisfied, that there existed an overwhelming necessity which made it absolutely indispensable to take away from that colony its independent Legislature, to deprive it of those political functions and privileges which it had so long enjoyed, and to substitute for a free form of Government, the arbitrary power of a Governor and Council, aided by salaried commissioners to be sent out from this country.

Lord *John Russell*: After what the noble Lord has said, I think it necessary, before this debate closes, to say a few words on the subject of this measure, and to point out what I consider to be the real question for our consideration. The noble Lord has not, I think, correctly represented the course pursued by her Majesty's Government. The noble Lord said, that the abolition of the apprenticeship system had been forced on, and forwarded by, the agitation and excitement which existed here on the subject, and the right hon. Gentleman, the Member for the University of Cambridge, who spoke early in the debate, spoke almost as if we had begun the agitation on this subject, with a view of putting an end to the apprenticeship. Now, the view which had been taken by her Majesty's Government—a view which they supported both in that House and elsewhere—was, that although it was desirable to put an earlier termination to the apprenticeship system than was originally contemplated, they could not, with propriety, do so without consulting the Assembly of Jamaica on the subject, and that it would be more properly terminated by an Act of that Assembly than by any Act passed here. That, Sir, was the opinion which we maintained in this House, an opinion which, at the time, subjected us to considerable odium and unpopularity, and which was opposed by several Members on that side of the House as well as this, who were inclined to take the more popular side of the question, viz., that without further delay, the apprenticeship system ought to be put an end to by the aid of the British Legislature. Such, however, was not our view, and we contended against that conclusion. We would not interfere with the West India Legislature, and in consequence we subjected ourselves to a great deal of unpopularity in this country. But this is not the question at present in debate. The Act on which the Legislative Assembly of Jamaica has founded its protest is an entirely different one. It is an Act that was thought necessary for us to pass in consequence of the conduct both of the Legislature and of individuals in Jamaica, which prove that the Acts of Emancipation were most grossly evaded, and that those called apprentices, whom my noble Friend, by his bill, proposed to redeem from slavery, and place in an intermediate state during their progress to complete freedom, were most inhumanly and cruelly treated, and in a manner of which that Act of Emancipation never contemplated the probability. To put an end to these abuses, Lord Glenelg introduced a bill into the House of Peers, a measure which it did not appear that hon. Gentlemen on the other side of the House, not even those hon. Gentlemen who were more directly interested in favour of the West-Indian colonies, thought fit to oppose. It was against this Act, and not against the Act for the Abolition of Apprenticeship, that the Assembly of Jamaica protested. That Act was agreed to after the deliberate attention of Parliament had been attentively given to it. It was passed unanimously by both Houses, and after a careful investigation of its details in committee. It was this Act, thus passed, that excited the anger of the House of Assembly in Jamaica, and the declaration made by them in their protest, a declaration which he was happy to hear his noble Friend say was neither proper nor decorous. The right hon. Gentleman, the Member for the University of Cambridge, did not characterize it in such strong terms—he only said, the House of Assembly exhibited a great want of cordiality. [Mr. *Goulburn:* not in reference to that protest.] I thought it was in reference to the protest; and certainly that protest could scarcely be properly characterized without the use of somewhat harsher terms. "It is not necessary," said the protest, "to look back upon the steps by which the British Parliament has usurped the legitimate powers of the Assembly of Jamaica; the monstrous pretexts which have accompanied her usurpation, and the falsehoods and slanders which have been advanced to justify it, it would be useless to complain of or to controvert." Certainly this was not language to which the very mild terms used by the right hon. Gentleman could properly be applied. This was something more than want of cordiality. [Mr. *Goulburn:* It was to a different subject that I applied that term.] But it was this Act on which the opposition arose, and on which the Assembly, as it appears to me, showed a determination not to listen to any attempt to guide them in their course of legislation, for they go further and deny the right of the Imperial Parliament to interfere. They say the Imperial Parliament of this country has a right to regulate the commerce of those islands, but with respect to any other power over the Provincial Legislature, that we have no right whatever. What, Sir, I ask, does this amount to? Why, it is a denial of the power by which slavery was abolished. It is a denial of that power by which the Slavery Abolition Bill, and the Amendment Bill, were carried into effect. It applies, likewise to the Apprenticeship Act, and to every amendment which Parliament chooses to enact. Now, with reference to this part of the question, though I endured a great deal of unjust obloquy in opposing the instant abolition of apprenticeship last year, yet I was one of those who agreed to the resolution proposed by my right hon. Friend —a resolution adopted by the Legislature, and which declares it to be the solemn duty of Parliament to watch over and protect the interests of the black population of the West Indies. That resolution stated, that the anxious attention of that House would be directed to the state of the negro population whenever the expiration of the term of apprenticeship entitled them to the full enjoyment of entire freedom. Now, Sir, I say these words, this pledge to watch over the condition of the negro population, are totally inconsistent with the words of the protest. My noble Friend himself never contemplated that this large black population, being once totally free, the House would allow the Legislature of Jamaica to enact any statutes, however cruel, however evasive of the Emancipation Act, and that the British Parliament was to say nothing to these Acts, because, according to the definition given in their protest, they do not relate to the regulation of commerce. [Lord *Stanley:* There is also the veto of the Crown.] I am aware that the power of enacting new laws is, in a great measure checked by the power of the Crown; yet, I can conceive that, without an opportunity of calling into exercise that power, there are many old colonial Acts and usages which, if applied to the state of the freed blacks, would in effect enable those who had the property for such a long course of years, together with superiority of other kinds, to exercise a very grinding oppression. It was not for this that we passed the Emancipation Act. It was not to see the slaves nominally free. We did not wish to boast throughout the globe that we had abolished the name of slavery throughout our dominions; but it was our object and wish, and for it we awarded a most liberal compensation, that not merely the name of slavery should be abolished, but that the emancipated blacks should enjoy the practical comforts, advantages, and blessings, of free subjects. Now, Sir, if this be the case, and if we shall have no reason to doubt when this Bill shall arrive to another stage that it was not, and is not, the intention of the Legislature of Jamaica fairly and honestly to treat the emancipated negroes as free inhabitants of the colony, as equal to themselves in point of political freedom, and not attempt, by indirect means, to use those powers which we have now abolished, and for which they received most ample and magnificent compensation—for if they should be inclined thus honestly and fairly to meet our views, God forbid that a British Parliament should interfere with their legislative privileges; but if they should not evince this disposition—that they adhere to their determination, that either from the love of property or of the power they have hitherto enjoyed, or in consequence of their prejudices against those of a different colour—if we find from any or all of these causes combined, the Legislative Assembly of Jamaica is prevented from doing justice to those whom we are pledged to protect, then I apprehend it becomes the bounden duty of the British Parliament to provide by some measure like the present to carry into effect the intentions of the British Legislature in passing the Act of Emancipation, and even though this cannot be accomplished without suspending, for some few years, the legislative functions of the Colonial Assembly, that suspension will be more than compensated for by the general happiness and liberties of the inhabitants of Jamaica, which such a measure is calculated to promote. Contending passions would cease to sway its population, and it would afford a means of restoring, in a few years, to a contented and free people, those powers which at present are not likely to be exercised without a struggle on the one hand to maintain a superiority long possessed, and on the other to obtain an equality with, or, perhaps, the degradation of, those once above them.

Mr. *Labouchere*, in reply, said, that he considered the declaration of the Legislative Assembly of Jamaica to be in effect, if not in terms, that they would not resume their functions without the repeal of the Prisons Act, and as he believed, also, without a pledge that we would not further interfere in their legislation, except in commercial matters.

Sir *Robert Peel* explained, that he had not defended the Legislative Assembly, and had declined doing so to a deputation which waited on him to solicit his aid.

Leave given. Bill brought in and read a first time.

Wreck of Timber Ships.] Mr. *G. Palmer* was happy to be able to state, that the motion which he intended to make, relative to the shipwreck of timber ships trading between this country and America, had the full approbation of the right hon. Gentleman opposite the President of the Board of Trade. The subject was one of very great importance, and the object of his motion was, to ascertain whether it were possible to reduce the yearly number of shipwrecks, by the adoption of some system of regulation, and to mitigate in some degree, the sufferings to which the crews were exposed. It was not his intention to go into the question at any length, but he might be allowed to state to the House, that in the year 1834 there were four timber ships wrecked on the rocks or coasts of this country or America, and seventeen more in the open sea. In 1835 there were fifteen timber ships wrecked on the rocks or coasts; thirty-four more in the open sea, and out of that number there were no less than sixteen vessels of which there was no account of the crews having been saved. In 1836 the number wrecked on the coasts was twenty-four, in the open sea forty-four, and of these there were sixteen of which there was no account of the crew. In 1837 the number wrecked on the coasts was seven; in the open sea, twenty-three; and of fifteen of those there was no account of the crew. In 1838 the wrecks on the coast amounted to sixteen; in the open sea forty-five; and out of that number there were twenty-six, of which there was no account of the crews. The loss of property, therefore, was very great; but the sufferings endured by the crews of those vessels lost in the open sea were of the most heart-rending description. It was well known that timber vessels did not sink immediately, like other ships, when overturned, and the crews frequently got upon the hulls, where they remained without food and water until they were picked up by some other vessel; but, in many cases, they perished from want, after having undergone the most frightful sufferings. The object he had in view, therefore, was to ascertain whether something might not be done to prevent such an extent of suffering, and to guard against so great a loss of property in future. He would not trouble the House with any further details, and he should therefore move, that "a select committee be appointed to inquire into shipwrecks of timber ships, and the loss of life attendant thereon."

Mr. Alderman *Thompson* had no objection to the motion of his hon. Friend, although he thought there might be some difference of opinion as to the cause of the great annual loss of ships employed in the timber trade with America. He hoped the attention of the committee would be directed to the subject of deck-loading, which he thought deserved consideration.

Mr. *Warburton* was of opinion, that the inquiry should be general, and not limited to timber ships. In his opinion, much of the loss was caused by forcing a trade with our colonies in which old ships and ships unfit for service were employed.

Mr. *Darby* considered the loss was occasioned by the bad description of ships employed in the timber trade with America. Old ships set off from the American coast heavily loaded with timber, and it could not be denied that there was great loss of life and property in consequence. He should therefore support the motion.

Motion agreed to.

Ecclesiastical Appointments Suspension Bill.] Mr. *Charles Wood* moved the third reading of the Ecclesiastical Appointments Suspension Bill, and stated, that he wished to propose an alteration in the clause which had been moved and adopted on a former occasion relative to the deanery of Exeter.

Sir *Robert Inglis* said, that the alteration, so far as he collected it as it was read, appeared to him to change entirely the whole character of the clause; making it retrospective instead of prospective.

Mr. *Charles Wood* said, that this was the case: but his hon. Friend was probably absent from the House when the clause itself had been introduced, otherwise he could not have forgotten, that his noble Friend who moved it, had been urged on all sides of the House, and chiefly by hon. Members opposite to him, to make this clause retrospective.

Sir *Robert Inglis* said, that he had been present on the occasion, and remembered well, that the noble Lord had distinctly refused to give that effect to the clause: and he thought, that the alteration now proposed, ought not to have been brought forward without having been first printed, with the votes, as the clause itself had been, and without any statement of the causes which had led to the alteration, and this at such an hour of the night.

Bill read a third time. Amendment made, and Bill passed.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Thursday, April 11, 1839.

Minutes.] Petitions presented. By the Earl of Haddington, from Caithness, for Church Extension in Scotland.—By the Earl of Bandon, from Cork, against the Repeal of the Corn-laws.—By the Earls of Falmouth, and Camperdown, and Lords Hatherton, and Redesdale, from four places, for a Uniform Penny Postage.—By Lord Glenelg, from one place, for the better Observance of the Sabbath.—By the Bishop of London, from some place, for Church Extension in the Colonies; and from another place, in favour of a National system of Education founded on the Scriptures.

East Indies—Russian Intrigues.] The Earl of *Aberdeen* rose to ask a question of the noble Viscount opposite, with reference to certain papers which had been presented relating to the war in the East. In those papers frequent mention was made of the interference of a Russian agent in the East; indeed, it was quite clear, that the opinions of that Gentleman had had considerable weight in the decisions of the Governor-general. He (Lord Aberdeen) took it for granted that explanations had both been demanded and received from the court of St. Petersburg; indeed, he understood that such had actually been the case, and, moreover, that such explanations were satisfactory. He further understood it to be the intention of her Majesty's Ministers to lay the papers relating to those explanations before Parliament. If such was their intention, he (Lord Aberdeen) could not but think that the natural and fair course would have been to have produced the explanations at the same time with the papers containing the matters to which they referred. That would have been the honest straightforward course to pursue, although perhaps not exactly that suited to her Majesty's Government. Was it the intention of Government to lay those explanations on the table of their Lordships' House?

Viscount *Melbourne* said, it was certainly true that the explanations referred to by the noble Earl had been made by the government of the Emperor of Russia, and that they were satisfactory. He had hoped, that the papers relating to such explanations would have been distributed before this time; but the consideration of what should be given and what should be withheld had occupied more time than was at first expected. He confidently hoped, however, that the papers would be presented without delay. He did not exactly understand the import of those of the noble Earl's observations which related to her Majesty's Government, unless indeed they were dictated by that peculiar style and tone of speaking adopted by the noble Earl in that House, which made all that fell from the noble Earl there so different from his real feelings and his real character. With the utmost personal respect for the noble Earl, he must say that he had a most unhappy and discourteous mode of expressing himself in the House.

The Duke of *Wellington* deprecated the course pursued by her Majesty's Government in regard to the papers in question, a course which had left the country and Europe under an erroneous impression as to the interference of the Russian agent, and the explanations of the Court of St. Petersburg. The noble Viscount had intimated, that the explanations in question were satisfactory to her Majesty's Government. Surely the noble Viscount would at once acknowledge that it would have been much fairer to have laid the explanations of the Russian government before their Lordships as nearly as possible at the same time with the erroneous impression conveyed by the papers previously presented to the House.

The Earl of *Aberdeen* very much regretted that his observations had not met with the approbation of the noble Viscount. They certainly had not been made with any hope that they would do so. Personally, he respected the noble Viscount as much as it was possible for one man to respect another; but if the noble Viscount therefore expected that he would hold himself bound to abstain from stigmatizing the course of his Government, he was much mistaken, as nothing would induce him to swerve from what he conceived to be his line of duty. The noble Viscount appeared to him to have made no answer whatever to the main part of his observations. He did not complain of delay in the delivery of the papers in question, but that they had been presented too soon; because, if the noble Viscount had been actuated by a proper sense of justice, he would have kept them all back until he could accompany them by the explanations which had been referred to. No doubt the considerations to which the noble Viscount had referred, had occupied a very great deal of time; but the papers to which he referred could require no time or discussion at all, for he presumed it was the intention of the noble Viscount to publish the explanations in the complete form in which they had been given. Of course the noble Viscount knew him too well to suppose that he was actuated by any other feelings than those of the highest esteem towards him personally; but he could assure the noble Viscount that towards his Government he entertained very different sentiments.

Subject dropped.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Thursday, April 11, 1839.

Minutes.] Bills. Read a third time:—Mutiny; Marine Mutiny.

Petitions presented. By Mr. Dennis O'Connor, Mr. O'Brien, and Mr. Ashton Yates, from several places, for Equal Justice to Ireland.—By Mr. Wallace, Mr. A. White, Sir H. Parnell, Mr. F. French, the Attorney-General, Mr. Baines, and the Lord-Advocate, from a great number of places, for a Uniform Penny Postage.—By Lords Stanley, and Ashley, and Mr. Trelawney, for a National system of Education founded on the Scriptures.—By Lord Ashley, Sir James Graham, Admiral Adam, Mr. W. Howard, and Mr. Mackenzie, from several places, for Church Extension in Scotland.—By Mr. M'Cleod, from Inverness, in favour of the Prisons Bill.—By Major Bryan, from Kilkenny, in favour of her Majesty's Ministers, and for a Continuance of their Policy in Ireland.—By Colonel Butler, from three places, to the same effect.—By Mr. Brotherton, from Salford, for Bonded Warehouses in that Borough.—By Sir E. Wilmot, and Mr. Easthope, from Warwickshire, and Leicester, for an Alteration in the Beer-laws.—By Sir G. Strickland, from several places, denying the Abuses attributed to Beer-houses, and praying for Justice to the Beer-house keepers.

Parliamentary Electors—(Scotland).] The *Lord Advocate* rose to ask permission to introduce two bills; the first for the better ascertaining and defining the rights of voting for Members of Parliament in Scotland; and the second for the better registration of parliamentary electors in Scotland. He believed that all persons acquainted with the subject would admit that it was desirable that some regulations were necessary. All would agree that it was a matter of great importance, and he trusted that the measures which he should introduce, would receive impartial attention, and that he should receive aid from all parties in placing the elective franchise in Scotland on such a footing as would give general satisfaction to the country. It had been a subject of general complaint under the old system of parliamentary election, that the practice of colourable votes prevailed to a great extent, and notwithstanding the attempts to get rid of it by the Reform Bill, complaints had been repeatedly made within the last three or four years of the great prevalence of similar practices. About five years ago he had stated, that such practices prevailed, and the system of creating colourable votes had gone on increasing since that time, and he feared it was likely to go on if it were not put a stop to by some legislative enactment. At the period he alluded to, he introduced a bill for this purpose, but it was at the time strongly opposed by several Members on both sides of the House, and in consequence he did not persist in it. By some it was opposed as being calculated to narrow the elective franchise, and by others it was opposed on the ground that it was a gross interference with the natural influence of property. Since that period the practice had much increased, and there was no doubt that it had excited very general dissatisfaction; and unless the House were to devise some means for stopping it, the evil would go on increasing to a greater extent than any one could be aware of. One great cause of this evil was, the limited extent of the county voters in Scotland; the counties were much more limited in extent than they were in England and Ireland, and consequently a greater motive was held out for creating a constituency, by means of fictitious votes, for the purpose of giving the victory to one party or the other. Thus the evil went on, and it was impossible to point out how far it might extend. So great, however, had it become that two Sessions ago a committee had been appointed for the purpose of ascertaining how far the provisions of the Reform Act had been trenched upon by the creation of fictitious votes in Scotland. It would be necessary for him to call the attention of the House to the report of this committee, which was not a very long document, although the evidence taken before the committee was of considerable extent. The report pointed out the manner in which the fictitious votes were created, and divided them into three heads. The first, life-renters; secondly, joint-proprietors; and thirdly, joint-tenants. As a proof of the extent to which the evil of this system prevailed he would read a short extract from the report:—

> "The fictitious or colourable votes brought under the notice of your committee may be classed under the following heads:—first, life-renters; second, proprietors, joint or several; third, joint-tenants; and of these more especially the first. For example, in the county of Selkirk, in 1832, the whole constituency was 180, among whom were very few life-renters, and none were non-residents. In 1836, the constituency had increased to 552, of whom 112 were life-renters, and of these five only were resident. In Peebles, the constituency, in 1832, was 301, of whom the life-renters were eight, and all resident. In 1836, the constituency was 576, of which the life-renters were 100, and only twenty-eight of them resident."

This statement would explain to the House the consequences of the inducements held out to persons engaged in political contests to increase the number of the constituency, and this increase took place to a greater extent where parties were more nearly balanced. Thus, in one county for instance, between 1832 and 1836, the constituency had been increased from 180 to 552. There had also been a great increase in the number of voters in the larger counties, which had been effected by dividing properties into small portions, and thus creating a number of 10*l.* houses. The committee showed that the increase had been chiefly effected by means of the creation of life-renters. There was every reason to believe that this description of property was extremely rare in Scotland previous to the passing of the Reform Bill, but it had greatly increased since that period. For instance, in the county of Selkirk, where previous to the Reform Bill there were only five life-renters, and none non-resident; there were at present 112, showing an increase of 107, and only five of them were resident. The same observation held good with respect to the county of Peebles, where formerly there were only eight life-renters, which in 1836 had increased to 100, and of them only twenty-eight were resident. The report described the manner in which this class of voters was created, but he did not think that it would be necessary for him to read it to the House. He felt this the more strongly, for he had put the question to many resident Scotch proprietors, and he could safely say, that it was admitted by gentlemen of all parties with whom he had conversed on the subject, that the evils of the system were manifold, and that the sooner a remedy was applied the better. He would appeal to any hon. Gentleman whether a very great evil had not been introduced with this system, which was experienced to a considerable extent by both parties in Scotland, and whether it was not for the interest of all parties that it should be got rid of. The report said—

> "Your committee have anxiously sought for the most effectual means of checking the creation of colourable votes under these several denominations of the franchise, and having carefully considered various suggestions which have been made to them, agree in recommending:—1. That all life-rents by grant should be limited to persons being in occupation, either by themselves or tenant, such tenant not being the fiar, or any one holding in the fiar's behoof. 2. That in all cases of proprietorship, whether in fee or life-rent, acquired otherwise than by succession, infeftment should be imperative. 3. That a clear beneficial interest of 10*l.* a-year, over all burdens and charges, should be proved to be derived from the subject claimed on. 4. That any party claiming as joint-tenant, should prove, to the satisfaction of the court, that such joint-tenancy involves a real participation of profits and liabilities, sufficient to afford the qualification. These changes, however, will not be of themselves sufficient to meet the evils complained of. There are circumstances in the construction and practice of the Registration and Appeal Courts, which afford facilities for the creation of these objectionable votes, and which have been made matter, as it appears to your committee, of well-founded objection. The principle of these are the admissibility of fresh evidence on appeal: the absolute proof required of collusion, which, in some cases, it is impossible to arrive at; the mode of examination adopted by most of the sheriffs; the expense incurred by the summoning of the same witnesses to the Registration Court, and again to the Court of Appeal, often at a very inconvenient distance; and, lastly, the want of uniformity of decision in the Appeal Courts."

This acknowledgement of the committee was of importance, although their suggestions were not very good, and would not prevent the recurrence of these evils. One of the greatest evils that was felt in Scotland in connection with the elective franchise was the great expense, delay, and vexation, that attended the proceedings before the registration courts. Great expense was incurred, in the first instance, in establishing a vote before the sheriffs, and the committee recommended that the law should be altered on this point. There was at present no means of securing anything like uniformity in the decisions of the several courts, and the decisions of one sheriff were often very different from those of others. There certainly could not be a greater evil than that arising from the want of uniformity in the interpretation of the law as to the rights and qualifications of voters, for if in one county the proceedings or qualifications were different from what they were in another, no person could know what course ought to be pursued, and there must arise great dissatisfaction with regard to the administration of the law on this important subject. On this point the committee said—

> "An appeal already lies from the decision of a single sheriff to a court composed of several of his professional brethren habitually engaged in adjudging similar cases in adjoining counties; and your committee think that much might be done to produce increased uniformity of practice in the whole body, by giving a farther reference to the body of the sheriffs at large in certain cases. With this view their attention has been directed to one of the provisions of the new 'Sheriffs of Scotland Bill,' which is now in progress through your House, whereby it is enacted, that the sheriffs of Scotland shall hold meetings periodically in Edinburgh, to revise the procedure of the Sheriffs' Courts. It seems to your committee that at these meetings the conflicting decisions of the Appeal Courts on claims for enrolment might also fail to be considered; and, with that view, making it imperative on the sheriffs to hold such meetings, it should be rendered competent for any party against whom a decision had been given, differing from what had been given on the same point in another appeal court, to bring that discrepancy under the knowledge of the court by whom his case has been decided, and require that the case shall be submitted for the consideration of the general meeting of the sheriffs. Your committee do not mean to advise that the decision come to by the general meeting shall in any way affect the case already disposed of; but they would hope it could hardly fail to influ-

ence the future decisions of the appeal courts."

He entertained no such hope, for where there were separate and independent courts with different judges, there was no reason why one court should show any deference to the decision of another, or that the judge should believe his opinion to be wrong, because it was not in conformity with that of another at a distant spot. He saw no other remedy for this evil than having an appeal court, with respect to votes, before which the decisions of all the sheriffs' courts could be decided; by this means uniformity of decision might be produced in every part of the country. On this point he confessed that he did not think that the committee had gone far enough, and he thought that they should have suggested either this or some other remedy. He proposed that this appeal court should consist of three judges to meet and sit at Edinburgh, and he considered that it would be extremely improper to mix this with any of the established tribunals. Let it be established on any footing that Parliament might think proper, and let it be either permanent or for a limited period. He believed that such a court would give satisfaction to the country, provided its proceedings were kept distinct from the other tribunals. He now came to another point—namely, the outvoters. The committee said they were not prepared to recommend an alteration in the franchise on so important a point as doing away with the outvoters. The practice of creating fictitious outvoters did not exist in either England or Ireland, and therefore no remedy was called for in either of those countries. This he said in answer to the objection that might be raised, that he proposed to get rid of a class of voters in Scotland that were to be continued in England and Ireland. He admitted that it was liable to that charge, but the reason for that was, that the evil did not exist in either of those countries. It did exist in Scotland. Was she, then, to have the remedy withheld because that evil did not exist in England or Ireland? The committee were in hopes that the number of non-resident fictitious voters would not increase. He frankly admitted that had he the slightest hope that such would be the case, he would have been most unwilling to introduce the provision in question, which would undoubtedly create division, which he much wished to avoid. But he saw no other remedy for the evil, and therefore he felt bound to propose it; and after all, he was satisfied that the evil would increase the moment either party felt there was a necessity for more voters. He did not blame any party in particular as to this practice. He would state one case, which came before the committee, when it was admitted a gentleman had created five voters on his estate. Four of these were from a distance, from Ireland he believed—the fifth was his game-keeper. It was in the nature of things that voters being wanted in such a manner, would be taken from a distance—it might probably be difficult to get them in the country. Would it be imagined that he would have gone hundreds of miles away for these votes, and subjected himself to travelling expenses, if he could have got them nearer to serve his purpose? But in this instance it had honestly been stated why these voters had been chosen. Perhaps the measure which he now proposed might be unpopular with some, but he would put it to the House if these means were suffered to exist, whether the real constituency would not eventually be overwhelmed by fictitious voters. On that ground he should propose to make residence necessary to the exercise of the franchise as a remedy for this evil. He did not say that this was necessary or advisable, either in England or Ireland, but he would say Scotland, where this evil existed, was not to be regulated by England or Ireland, where it was not complained of. Some regulations were necessary with respect to polling; but to these points he would merely refer. The hon. and learned Gentleman concluded by moving for leave to bring in a bill to ascertain and define the right of voting for Members of Parliament in Scotland.

Lord *Stanley* was extremely happy, that this subject had engaged the attention of the Government, and that a bill had been brought forward and submitted to the consideration of Parliament by the law adviser of the Crown in Scotland, and of course with the authority and sanction of Ministers, for the remedy of abuses, the existence of which could neither be denied nor overlooked. At the same time, he confessed, had the bill been brought forward in any other quarter, he should have felt very much disposed, after hearing the statement of the learned Lord, to resist its introduction, because, so far from being what it purported to be, "a Bill to ascertain and define the right of voting for Members of Parliament in Scotland," it was, in fact, a bill totally to alter the Reform Act,—to alter it, not only in opposition to the distinct recommendation of the Committee which sat during two Sessions, but to alter it in such a manner as to make the whole principle of the franchise in Scotland completely different from that of England and Ireland. He was not quite certain, that he rightly understood the learned Lord's proposition as to life-rents. He did not know whether the learned Lord intended to adopt the suggestion which was made in the Committee, but negatived without a division, entirely to abolish life-rents, or whether, while retaining a qualification distinctly and expressly given by the Reform Bill, analogous to the rent-charges in England and Ireland, it was meant simply to ascertain, that the person claiming really possessed a *bonâ fide*, or only a colourable, interest in the property. The course proposed by the Committee was, that steps should be taken to ascertain that the person claiming really was in possession of a substantial, and not a colourable interest; but the learned Lord seemed to say, whatever amount of interest might be possessed, a franchise distinctly given by the Reform Act should, if unaccompanied by residence, be altogether taken away. He could not consent so far to restrict the operation of the Reform Act; he could not consent, after the experience of the last few years, and the anxiety which had been show for the establishment in the three countries of a representation founded upon the same principles, to apply to the property of Scotland a different rule from that which governed England and Ireland. The learned Lord had referred to the various recommendations in the report, but omitted to inform the House that the Committee had taken into consideration the particular point of residence; and that a proposal was made by the hon. Member for Argyleshire to the effect, that unless the claimant should have an establishment, or personally reside in the county for not less than one month in each year, or unless he should possess an estate in the county of not not less than 100*l.* per annum, his franchise should be taken away; but it was negatived by a vote of nine to three, the learned Lord being in the minority. He thought, it would have been but fair if the learned Lord had stated this: the proposition was almost unanimously repudiated by the Committee. He felt confident, that the learned Lord would, in discussion, find it impossible to substantiate the view which he had taken upon this subject. He did not think this was the most convenient opportunity for entering into details; it would be better, avoiding discussion for the present, to allow the bill to be introduced—they would then see how the Government proposed to meet the exigencies of the case; they would then see whether abuses could not be remedied without a violation of principle; whether they could not do away with colourable and fictitious votes, at the same time retaining a franchise intentionally and substantially conferred by the Reform Act. There was only one other point on which he wished to say a few words before sitting down. The learned Lord had not stated, that his proposal for a court of appeal had been seriously considered by the Committee, and that the difficulty of it was so strongly felt, that they could not recommend its adoption. The learned Lord felt the impropriety of appointing the judges of the land, and mixing up political with their judicial functions. Was the proposal, then, that three barristers of six years' standing should sit for six weeks in Edinburgh, and practise the rest of the year? If so, what confidence could be placed in their proceedings, when they would have to revise the judgments and reverse the decisions of barristers of fifteen or twenty years' standing? He was far from thinking, that the bill would be satisfactory to the people of Scotland; but, as he was anxious that the evils complained of should be remedied, he hoped, without grossly violating the principles involved in the Reform Act, he should offer no opposition to the introduction of the bill.

Leave given.

RAILWAYS.] Mr. *P. Thomson* moved for the appointment of a select Committee to inquire into the state of communication by railways, and to report their observations thereon to the House. It was intended, he said, that the Committee should consider the present state of the regulations affecting railways as settled by the bills already passed through Parliament. It was well known to the House that there was now a great number of applications from railway companies for bills to confer fresh powers, and before additional powers were granted, it was fit that some inquiry should take place as to the manner in which those already vested in such bodies were exercised. Some recommendation might also emanate from the committee, as to the introduction of provisional regulations into the bills now passing through the House. It was not necessary for him to refer to particular instances to show the expediency of an inquiry. A variety of different regulations affected different companies, which it was desirable to reduce to an uniform standard. An arrangement of this kind would equally benefit the public and the railway companies. Every one must admit that the advantages secured to the public by railways were very great, but they were not unattended by inconveniences, the removal of which was much to be desired. As he did not anticipate that any opposition would be offered to his motion, he would not at present enter more fully into the subject.

Motion agreed to.

IMPRISONMENT FOR DEBT.] The *Attorney-General* moved for leave to bring in a bill to amend the Imprisonment for Debt Abolition Act, passed last Session of Parliament, in as far as relates to proprietors of newspapers being obliged to insert advertisements in their newspapers for the sum of 3*s*. The hon. and learned Gentleman said that by a clause in the act proprietors of newspapers were compelled to insert, as advertisements, the schedules of insolvent debtors, whatever their length, for the sum of 3*s*. The clause had been taken from a former act, and he did not expect that any practical inconvenience would have arisen from it. Representations, however, had been made to him which induced him to move for leave to bring in a bill to correct a provision which he now believed to be extremely unjust. It would be quite as fair to deal with any professional property in this way, as with that of newspaper proprietors. They might as well compel a lawyer to travel a certain number of miles for a wholly inadequate compensation, or a merchant to sell his goods at a price below the market rate. Nothing could justify such an encroachment on property but overwhelming necessity, which certainly did not exist in this case. There were other circumstances in which advertisements were required by law to be inserted in newspapers, but there was no other example of a penal enactment fixing a particular sum as the price. The act of last Session made it necessary that notice should be given in the newspapers before the discharge of an insolvent. It would not do to allow newspaper proprietors the power of excluding the advertisements, or of charging an extortionate sum for them. He would, therefore, propose that the insertion should be compulsory on a reasonable compensation being offered.

Motion agreed to.

Leave given.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Friday, April 12, 1839.

MINUTES.] Bill. Read a first time:—Church Discipline.

Petitions presented. By the Marquess of SALISBURY, Lord ROLLE, the Earl of RADNOR, and the Duke of NORFOLK, from a number of places, for a Uniform Penny Postage.—By the Earl of KINNOUL, the Marquess of BUTE, the Earl of ROSSLYN, and the Marquess of DOWNSHIRE, from many places, against the Repeal of the Corn-laws.—By the Earl of CAWDOR, and the Marquess of BUTE, from several places, for Church Extension in Wales.—By the Bishop of ST. ASAPH's, from Flint, and Denbigh, against the alienation of Church Property in Wales; also against the Union of the Sees of Bangor and St. Asaph's.

REGISTRATION OF VOTERS (IRELAND).] The Earl of *Wicklow* said, that in the last Session of Parliament he had asked a question of the noble Viscount opposite as to the intention of Government to introduce some measure for the purpose of improving the system of Parliamentary registration in Ireland, on which occasion he had received from the noble Viscount a very satisfactory answer. But, unfortunately, the result did not answer his expectation. He now thought it right again to introduce the subject, because he saw that in the other House of Parliament a bill had been introduced by the Lord Advocate for the purpose of improving the mode of registering voters in Scotland; and he believed that a similar measure was intended to be brought in by her Majesty's Attorney General with reference to registration in this country. Now, if it were considered necessary that such a bill should be introduced for England or for Scotland, those who were well acquainted with the mode of registration in Ireland, or who had paid any attention to the subject, must be convinced that a measure of a similar nature was infinitely more necessary for that country. A bill on this subject had been introduced in the

House of Commons last Session, but it did not come up to their Lordships' House. It failed, he believed, because Ministers had affixed to it a kind of explanatory clause with respect to the nature of the qualification, a clause that was, as he conceived, totally unnecessary. It involved a disputed question of much importance; and, in consequence of that clause having been introduced, the bill failed altogether. He found, however, that the Lord Advocate of Scotland had taken a different course. He had introduced two bills—one for the improvement of the mode of registration, and the other to define the qualification that gave the right of voting. The qualification in Ireland, if it proceeded on the principle adopted in the new Poor-law for that country, would, he was convinced, answer much better than the present system. Where the registration merely depended on the oaths of individuals in a country so demoralized as Ireland unfortunately was, it was impossible that gross perjury should not be committed. What he desired was, that the Registry Act should be amended, even supposing the qualification to remain as it was under the present bill. He wished, therefore, to impress on the mind of the noble Viscount the necessity of introducing some measure on this subject. The registration, under the Reform Act, would expire next year; and he trusted that in the mean time something would be done to put an end to that gross system of perjury, which was so disgraceful to the country, and so repugnant to every just and proper feeling. The noble Earl concluded by inquiring whether her Majesty's Ministers meant to introduce, as they had done last Session, a bill for the improvement of the registration of voters in Ireland?

Viscount *Melbourne* said, it was not the intention of her Majesty's Ministers, as at present advised, to introduce any such bill.

RAILROADS—IRELAND.] The Marquess of *Lansdowne* said, he was anxious to draw the attention of their Lordships to the subject of two petitions which he held in his hand—a subject upon which considerable misapprehension seemed to have prevailed, both in and out of Parliament. The petitions were from the grand jury of the county of Kerry, and also from a public meeting held in the same county, and they both prayed their Lordships to give their assent to a measure for the introduction of a general and uniform system of railroads in Ireland. These petitions were signed by many most respectable landed proprietors and inhabitants of the county of Kerry. If ever there were a solemn pledge given on the part of Government during the discussion which ended in the passing of the Irish Poor-law last Session, it was, that their Lordships would, with reference to that law, by every means in their power, encourage the employment of the labouring poor of Ireland. Now, of all the means for affording and extending such employment, there was not one so well calculated or so likely to advance the moral improvement of Ireland as the introduction into that country of an extensive and uniform railroad system, which would afford scope for general labour. It became, he was aware, a grave question for consideration, whether their Lordships would deem it most expedient to promote such a system by lending a ready ear and giving great encouragement to private speculation and enterprise, or by adopting the more extensive, and, as he believed, the more efficacious system, of encouraging the formation of railroads, bearing on the whole and every part of Ireland, but, at the same time, without connecting themselves in any way with private speculations. When they reflected on the multiplied resources which a well considered plan of railroads was calculated to bring into play, they ought to consider whether it would not be the wiser course to assist and encourage a general system, without, as he had before said, interfering with individual enterprise. It would be for them to decide, whether they would act on the report of the Commissioners appointed on their address, to consider this subject, and adopt such a general system as he had referred to, and as had been recommended by the Commissioners. The characters of the individuals by whom that report was drawn up, who were unconnected with local or party interests, afforded a fair guarantee that they had performed their duty fairly and impartially. The report had been for some time on their Lordships' Table, and it would be for them and the other House of Parliament, at no distant period, to decide whether they would act upon it or not. A report had gone forth to the public, which was adverted to in both the petitions, and on which he felt it necessary to make a few remarks. Earnestly as the petitioners desired that a general system of railroads should be introduced into Ireland, they expressed their decided opinion, that it ought not, and need not, to be carried into operation at the expense of the public money of this country. What they desired was, that the introduction of a system of railroads should be facilitated by a loan—a loan in the first instance—granted by this country, the interest and repayment of which were not only to be charged on the produce of the railways themselves, but, for the better security of the money, ultimately to be charged on those counties through which the railroads might run. He knew that an opinion prevailed, that when money was once sent to Ireland, it was not very apt to be returned from those shores; but if their Lordships would look at the reports of the Commissioners of Public Works, laid before them from time to time, he believed they would find, that better security did not exist than existed in that country for any sum so advanced. No less a proportion than two-thirds of the Exchequer-bills which had been advanced for the promotion of public works in Ireland were now in a course of being repaid; and if the remaining third were not in that course also, it was because those works were not yet concluded. Those works had besides the effect of calling into useful employment large sums expended by individual proprietors, which could never, under other circumstances, have been expected to be applied to public objects in Ireland. He placed much confidence in the statements of these petitioners, and he certainly believed, that great advantage would be derived from supporting their views.

The Duke of *Wellington* had not any intention, on the presentation of a petition, to enter into a discussion of the general question; but he could not help observing the irregularity which had taken place. He confessed, that he was astonished to see the noble Marquess, the President of the Council, and one of her Majesty's Ministers, present a petition to that House, the prayer of which was for a grant of the public money, because although the noble Marquess had endeavoured to shift off the prayer for money, yet the petition prayed for a loan of exchequer bills, and it was thus in effect a prayer for money. He wished to know whether the noble Marquess, or the noble Viscount at the head of her Majesty's Government, would come down and give the consent of the Crown for the House entertaining this petition with such a prayer?—for it was no part of the duty of that House to originate a subject of that kind. There was no man in that House more decidely of opinion that the whole question of railroads should have been taken into consideration before the different lines had been adopted and their bills carried. Indeed, some years ago he had himself added clauses to not less than twenty-five of those bills, enabling her Majesty's Government of that day to frame regulations for the several railroads. If his intention had been carried into execution, and if similar provisions had been introduced into all the acts, it would have prevented some of the evils of which the noble Marquess complained, and which he admitted he felt in as great a degree as he had ever felt evils. Much inconvenience was now felt by the public, and he saw by the votes of the other House, that a right hon. Gentleman had originated a Committee to take this subject into consideration.

The Marquess of *Lansdowne* explained, that if there were any irregularity in this petition, every petition which had been presented on the subject of the Corn-laws, a subject relating to the public money, had been improperly received. The present petition did not pray for a specific grant, but for a comprehensive system of railroads in Ireland, and prayed the House to concur in any measure which might be sent up from the other House to effect this object. If such a measure should come up from the other House, he had no doubt that his noble Friend would be prepared to give to it the assent of the Crown.

The Earl of *Wicklow* regretted the clamour which had been raised upon the first proposal of this measure. It was his conscientious opinion, that the commissioners had drawn up their report with the utmost fairness and ability. He had read it carefully, and felt convinced, that a system of railways would be most beneficial to Ireland, while the plan which they proposed would not be liable to the objections and difficulties which had been encountered in England.

Petition laid on the Table.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Friday, April 12, 1839.

MINUTES.] Bills. Read a second time:—Paper Duties; Brick Duties.

Petitions presented. By the O'CONNOR DON, Major BRYAN, Messrs. C. O'BRIEN, and SOMERS, from a number of places, in favour of the Ministerial Policy in Ireland.—By Viscount SANDON, and Mr. LOCKHART, from two places, in favour of Scriptural Education.—By Mr. BLAIR, from one place, for Church Extension in Scotland.—By Mr. H. BERKELEY, from Bristol, for the Repeal of the Corn-laws.—By Sir B. HALL, from Monmouthshire, against the Beer-laws.—By Mr. EWART, from some place, in favour of a Uniform Penny Postage. —By Mr. BAINES, from the Society for the Promotion of Peace, against any appeal to Arms in Canada.

GOVERNMENT OF IRELAND.] Sir *R. Peel* said, he had prepared a draught of the amendment that he intended to move to the motion which the noble Lord opposite, the Secretary for the Home Department, had intimated his intention of submitting to the House on Monday next. It would be recollected, that in the early part of the week he (Sir R. Peel) had said, that on this day, or if possible earlier, he should, in order to prevent the House being taken by surprise, give notice of the amendment which he purposed moving to the motion on the subject of Ireland which stood for Monday. His intended amendment contained some reference to proceedings which had recently taken place before the other House of Parliament, and he was aware, that in point of form he could not deliver in a notice which referred to any proceedings of the Lords without the appointment of a committee to search the Lords' journals. He took for granted, that at a later period of that night the noble Lord would allow him to move for such committee; in the meanwhile he should, for the convenience of the House, read the notice of amendment which he intended to place upon the book. The right hon. Baronet read as follows:—

"Resolved—That, on the 13th day of March last, a Motion was made in this House for the production of various documents connected with the state of Ireland in respect to crime and outrage, including communications made to the Irish Government relating to offences connected with ribbandism, and all memorials, resolutions, and addresses, forwarded to the Irish Government by magistrates, or other official persons, in respect of crimes and outrages committed in Ireland, and the answers thereto.

"That the period included within the returns so called for, extends from the commencement of the year 1835 to the present time; and that the motion made for the production of them was assented to by this House, no opposition to it having been offered on the part of Her Majesty's Government.

"That, on the 21st day of March last, the House of Lords appointed a Select Committee 'to inquire into the state of Ireland since the year 1835, in respect to crime and outrage, which have rendered life and property insecure in that part of the empire.'

"That, in consequence of the appointment of such Committee by the House of Lords, it has been proposed that this House should resolve, 'That it is the opinion of this House, that it is expedient to persevere in those principles which have guided the executive Government of Ireland of late years, and which have tended to the effectual administration of the law, and the general improvement of that part of the United Kingdom.'

"Resolved, That it appears to this House that the appointment of a Committee of Inquiry by the House of Lords, under the circumstances and for the purpose above-mentioned, does not justify Her Majesty's Ministers in calling upon this House without previous inquiry, or even the production of the information which this House has required, to make a declaration of opinion with respect to one branch of the public policy of the executive Government, still less a declaration of opinion which is neither explicit as to the principles which it professes to approve, nor definite as to the period to which it refers; and that it is not fitting that this House should adopt a proceeding which has the appearance of calling in question the undoubted right of the House of Lords to inquire into the state of Ireland in respect to crime and outrage, more especially when the exercise of that right by the House of Lords does not interfere with any previous proceeding or resolution of the House of Commons, nor with the progress of any legislative measure assented to by the House of Commons, or at present under its consideration."

Mr. *T. Duncombe* then said, that as the right hon. Baronet opposite had determined to place upon record his sentiments respecting the intended motion of the noble Lord, the Secretary for the Home Department, he thought it right to do the same. He gave notice, then, that in the event of the House adopting the motion of the noble Secretary, he should move as an addition thereto, that in the opinion of that House, it was expedient that such further reform be made in the representation of the people as would conduce to their contentment, and to the general security and welfare of the kingdom at large. As the party on the other side of the House had given their notice, he felt bound to give his on behalf of himself and others, as well in as out of that House.

INSULT TO THE BRITISH FLAG — THE EXPRESS PACKET.] Viscount *Palmerston* said, that in laying on the Table, by command of her Majesty, certain papers relating to the taking a pilot out of the Express packet by the French force on the coast of Mexico, he wished to avail himself of the opportunity of stating, that the papers contained some communications that had passed with the French Government on the subject; they contained the statement of the officer in command of the packet with regard to the transaction, and a letter of Count Sebastiani, containing an explanation and apology, honourable alike to the Governmant offering, and to the Government receiving it, and having been offered without any official demand, it was, therefore, the more honourable and creditable to the French Government. Count Sebastiani, in his communication, stated, that he was charged by the King of the French to make known to the Government of her Britannic Majesty the deep regret which the King of the French felt at hearing of the removal of a Mexican pilot by his force from the British packet-ship the Express; and he also stated, that when Admiral Baudin unfortunately directed that step to be taken, he was not aware that the vessel belonged to the British marine force. This incident, therefore, had been the result of a mistake, and in no degree arose from any want of respect to the English flag. The affair was sincerely deplored by the King of the French and his Government, as well as by the commandant of the French squadron on the coast of Mexico, who expressed an anxious hope, that no error of the kind would occur again; and it was added, that the strictest instructions had been given for the most vigilant attention, which would prevent a similar occurrence. Count Sebastiani added, that he trusted this explanation would prove satisfactory to the British Government, and that nothing would ever disturb the harmony and union which now existed between the two countries, and which both Governments had so much at heart to maintain.

PRISONS (SCOTLAND).] On the question, that the House resolve itself into a Committee on the Prisons (Scotland) Bill.

Sir *G. Clerk* was understood to say, that he should propose a division of the measure into two bills; and he certainly thought, that if a Board of Commissioners were appointed to sit in Edinburgh for the regulation of jails in Scotland, they ought not to be invested with any greater powers than were absolutely necessary for insuring uniformity in the discipline of prisons in that part of the United Kingdom. It would be highly objectionable to take the control of local funds from the hands of those magistrates who had hitherto exercised it, and lodge it in a general board, and the whole expense of erecting the general prisons or penitentiaries should be defrayed by Government. If however, this could not be granted, he should propose, that instead of such general assessment of the expense, founded on very arbitrary rules, as would be fixed by the bill, all persons sent by the sentence of a court to one of these prisons, should be maintained in it at the expense of the district from which they were sent. This would obviate the very serious evil of imposing a heavy burden on parts of the country where crime was rare. If the hon. Gentlemen opposite would assent to neither of these suggestions, he must still urge, that instead of placing the whole money to be raised under the bill, amounting to 30,000*l.* per annum, at the disposal of a general board or of the inspectors of prisons, to be distributed at their discretion, without reference to the amount of crime in particular districts, it should be put under the management of local boards, subject to the superintendence of the general board. With respect to assessment, he thought he had the authority of hon. Gentlemen opposite, according to what they had stated last Session, for holding that the two objects of local and general assessment could not be effectually provided for in the same bill. He could assure the House, that he was most anxious for a measure of reform of the system of prisons in Scotland, and very unwilling to throw delays in the way of accomplishing that object. It was therefore only from a sense of paramount duty, that he moved that it be an instruction to the committee to divide the bill into two bills, if they think fit to do so.

Mr. *Fox Maule* said, that the hon. Baronet must excuse him if he doubted his sincerity when he said, that he advocated the principle of this bill, as his speech was undoubtedly directed against every clause of it. The hon. Baronet chiefly objected to the unconstitutional powers to be given to the board, but that objection was removed by the appeal to Parliament which the bill gave to any parties who might consider themselves injuriously affected by the operations of the board. The hon. Baronet also said, that the Board would be composed of some of the Judges of the Court of Session, who from the pressure of their other avocations would not be able to attend to the duties connected with it; but those avocations were not so severe as to prevent them from giving half an hour of their time once or twice a week to the duties required under this bill. He could not agree to the proposition of the hon. Baronet, and must give it his opposition.

Sir *William Rae* denied, that the gentlemen of Scotland had been neglectful of the state of prisons there, and every county would show, that large sums of money had been laid out in the improvements of gaols. He admitted, however, that what had been done had not been done upon a good principle, and therefore, he was very anxious, that every thing should be done under the direction of a board properly constituted. He thought it would have been much better, that upon this subject two bills should have been brought in, instead of the one now before the House, but still he would not divide the House upon an opposition to it.

Mr. *Hawes* said, that as he had paid some attention to the subject, he hoped he might be allowed to make some observations on the present occasion. There was a great difference between the systems of Scotch and English prisons. In this country the whole of the prisons were supported out of the county funds; but the object of the hon. Baronet was to have the Scotch prisons maintained by the public generally. The whole sum in dispute was 30,000*l.*; and for this sum, which would not amont to one penny in the pound, the hon. Baronet would risk this bill. As penitentiaries were required in Scotland for the accommodation of Scotch offenders, it was clear, that the expense of such prisons ought to fall upon the landed interest; and as there was no possibility of ascertaining the real state of crime in Scotland, it was no valid objection to the present measure, that they were unable to define the particular amount which must be paid by each district. For his own part, he thought, that this bill would be a great advantage to Scotland, and therefore he should give it his cordial support.

Mr. *Colquhoun* said, that great injustice had been done to the gentry of Scotland, when it was said, that they had done nothing for the prisons of that country, and this would be apparent when he stated, that from the year 1819 down to the present time they had expended no less a sum than 66,000*l.* on the improvements of the prisons of that country. He did not object to the proposed central board; on the contrary, it might be advantageous; but what he feared was that placing such extensive powers in their hands would operate unfairly on the different counties, by making those counties where prisons were carefully managed contribute to the support of the prisons of other counties, in which there might be an improvident expenditure. He objected to taxation without representation, and therefore he thought, that though it might be proper to place the penitentiaries under the control of a general board, it would be most unfair to take the government of the county prisons out of the hands in in which they were now placed. On the whole he approved of dividing the bill into two bills.

The *Lord Advocate* thought there might be an advantageous division of the prisoners detained on charges before trial, and those confined afterwards. Those detained in custody before trial, ought to share in various advantages which those kept in custody afterwards ought not to have. That was the only advantage that could be derived from dividing the bill into two parts. Under the superintendence of the board, such prisons would be erected as were necessary. He was glad that the hon. Member for Kilmarnock was not against the tax. The purpose they all had in view—namely, the better regulation of prisons, would not be attained by dividing the bill into two. There were great objections to dividing the bill into two; in the first place, only one might pass, and the Members for England might not be disposed to advance 10,000*l.* without security that the other bill would pass to provide adequate prison accommodation for other parts of Scotland.

Captain *Gordon* regretted exceedingly that the proposition of his hon. Friend below (Sir G. Clerk) was not acceded to. The gentlemen of Scotland were very desirous to have good prison accommodation provided. Many districts had already assessed themselves for that purpose, and they were extremely anxious that those who had not done so should be compelled to do so; and he had no doubt, therefore, if his hon. Friend would provide a bill for that especial purpose, but that he would pass it. The hon. Member talked of district prisons. Let each district pay for its prisons; but why tax a distant district for prisons in which it had no benefit? He contended that the jail of Perth, if properly fitted up, would answer all the purposes required, and provide sufficient accommodation for the prisoners, without going to the expense of 30,000*l.* in fitting up prisons. If the hon. Member the Under Secretary of State was not prepared to divide the bill into two, let the bill compel those who had not hitherto provided prisons to provide them.

The House divided on Sir G. Clerk's Motion:—Ayes 19; Noes 65:—Majority 46.

List of the AYES.

Arbuthnott, hon. H.
Baillie, Colonel.
Blair, J.
Broadley, H.
Bruges, W. H. L.
Gordon, hon. Capt.
Goulburn, rt. hon. H.
Hepburn, sir T. B.
Hodgson. R.
Hope, hon. C.
Hope, G. W.
Houstoun, G.
Kemble, H.
Lockhart, A. M.
Mackenzie, T.
Mackenzie, W. F.
Rae, rt. hon. sir W.
Sinclair, Sir G.
Vivian, J. E.

TELLERS

Clerk, Sir G.
Colquhoun, I. C.

List of the NOES.

Abercromby, hn. G. R.
Adam, Admiral
Aglionby, H. A.
Baines, E.
Bannerman, A.
Baring, F. T.
Barnard, E. G.
Bentinck, Lord W.
Bernal, R.
Blake, W. J.
Bodkin, J. J.
Briscoe, J. I.
Brotherton, J.
Campbell, Sir J.
Chalmers, P.
Craig, W. G.
Dalmeny, Lord
Dennistoun, J.
Donkin, Sir R. S.
Dundas, F.
Dundas, hon. J. C.
Dundas, Sir R.
Elliot, hon. J. E.
Ellice, E.
Ferguson, R.
Finch, F.
Fort, J.
Gillon, W. D.
Gordon, R.
Grey, rt. hon. Sir G.
Hastie, A.
Hawes, B.
Hobhouse, T. B.
Howick, Lord Visct.
Hutton, R.
Loch, J.
Macleod, R.
M'Taggart J.
Melgund, Lord Vis.
Morris, D.
Murray, A.
Murray, rt. hon. J. A.
Muskett, G. A.
O'Ferrall, R. M.
Parker, J.
Parnell, rt. hon. Sir H.
Rice, rt. hon. T. S.
Rolfe, Sir R. M.
Salwey, Colonel
Smith, B.
Stanley, E. J.
Steuart, R.
Stuart, Lord J.
Stock, Dr,
Strickland, Sir G.
Strutt, E.
Thornely, T.
Troubridge, Sir E. T.
Turner, E.
Vigors, N. A.
Villiers, hon. C. P.
Wallace, R.
Warburton, H.
Worsley, Lord
Yates, J.

TELLERS.

Fox Maule, hon. F.
Kinnaird, hon. A. F.

Bill committed, and House resumed.

SUPREME COURTS—(SCOTLAND)—JUDGES' SALARIES.] On the question, "that the Speaker do leave the chair to go into Committee on the Supreme Courts (Scotland) Bill."

Mr. *Wallace* rose with reluctance, to bring forward the amendment, of which he had given notice, because he was quite aware that this measure had already received very considerable discussion; but he conceived it to be his duty to use his best endeavours to prevent this bill passing further than it had done just now, without they were assured, at the same time, that when increasing the salaries of the judges, they should have a thorough reform of those courts over which they presided. The hon. Member moved, "that an humble address be presented to her Majesty, praying that she will be graciously pleased to direct an enquiry to be made by persons unconnected with Scotland—first, into the nature and extent of the duties incumbent on the thirteen judges of the Supreme Court in Scotland, keeping in view the short period those judges sit on the bench, the great length of the vacations they enjoy, and the continious large decrease of suits tried before them. Secondly, whether one Court of Review, consisting of four judges, instead of two Review Courts of co-ordinate jurisdiction under eight judges, as at present, would not facilitate the ends of justice in the Supreme Court of Scotland, and effect a saving to the country of 14,000*l.* a-year. Thirdly, whether substantial and more speedy justice would be insured to the people of Scotland by extending the Sessions of the Supreme Court from five to eight months of the year, and the sittings of the judges from less than two hours to five hours daily, with the substitution of oral for written evidence, and an increase of *viva voce* procedure."

Mr. *Edward Ellice:* in seconding the amendment, said, that he really had hoped, after all that had passed, both in and out of that House, some notice would have been taken of the statements that had gone forth with reference to the capacities and efficiency of the present bench of judges in the Supreme Court. He regretted extremely that her Majesty's Government, who had heard the statements over and over again reiterated, had not thought it proper to make some inquiry into the facts of the case, or into the truth of allegations which represented those in whose favour hon. Members were then called upon to vote a heavy addition to the public expenditure, as drawbacks, rather than otherwise, on the due administration of justice in Scotland. He still more regretted that his hon. Friend, the Member for Aberdeen, was not then found in his place, to persist in the motion of which he had given notice on a former occasion, for a Commission to examine into the efficiency of the judges. In reference to a remark which had fallen from the hon. Baronet, the Member for Stamford, on a former debate, when he said that actions for libel would have been brought against the authors of those statements, had they not been protected by the privileges of that House, he begged then to state to the hon. Baronet, that if he wished it, he (Mr. Ellice) would at any time direct his attention to statements made in the public press going far beyond, in detail and assertion, any thing that had passed in Parliament. He begged to ask the hon. Baronet whether, as it was currently reported, the friends of the learned judges who had been alluded to, had not had a meeting with reference to the proposed prosecution of a newspaper which contained one of those articles, and whether the idea of prosecuting had not been at once abandoned, on account of the unanimous opinion of the meeting, that they had no chance of obtaining a verdict in their favour? He begged to assure the House, that although he stood alone, as it appeared he then did, in that matter, exposed to much animadversion both there and elsewhere, he still did not repent having brought, what he considered a great public grievance, under the attention of the House. He could only regret that other hon. Members, who he knew were well aware of the existence of those grievances, had not thought themselves in a condition to come forward and give him their assistance in endeavouring to obtain redress. This being, however, not the case, and knowing that he alone could do no good in moving for a Commission similar to that which had been formerly suggested by hon. Friend the Member for Aberdeen, which would be opposed generally by both sides of the House, he would not trouble the House farther, merely contenting himself with recording his decided opinion on the subject. He then begged to second the amendment of his hon. Friend, the Member for Greenock, which, however, only referred to the system of judicature in Scotland.

The *Lord Advocate* opposed the amendment. He did not mean to say, that the system of judicature which was in operation in Scotland, was altogether free from defects. Ever since he had been in that House he had been studiously anxious to do every thing in his power to improve the system, and much of late had been done to remedy the defects which were acknowledged to exist. But, while he stated thus much, he was bound to say, that the system which the hon. Gentleman so decidedly opposed, had met with the approbation of some of the most eminent lawyers in England, and had received the sanction of an Act of Parliament. He could not see how the hon. Gentleman opposite could refuse to make a necessary addition to the salaries of the Scotch Judges, considering that the salaries of the English Judges had been increased, and considering also the great reduction which had been made in the annual expense of the system of judicature established in Scotland. By the reductions which had taken place, upwards of 50,000*l.* had been saved, and the suitors also had been largely benefited, as the fees of the Court had been diminished about 14,000*l.* But this was not all. He was of opinion, that the vacations were longer than, perhaps, they ought to be, and, accordingly, the bill before the House made essential alterations in regard to this part of the system. By the bill a power was given by which the judges, when necessary, would be empowered to sit for two months longer than the period allowed by the former Act. With regard to the jury system in civil cases, he would only say, that he was fully persuaded, that the more it was known the more it would rise in the estimation of the people of Scotland, and that, in the end, it would be universally approved of.

Sir *W. Rae* said, that the ground upon which the hon. Member for St. Andrews founded his complaints against the Court of Session before the Committee which sat to inquire into this subject, rested upon the evidence of a Mr. Campbell, the editor of a certain law journal, and of another person who had been under clerk in the Court of Session. But when he (Sir W. Rae) came to examine those gentlemen, they broke down in their evidence most completely, as was proved by the minutes of evidence taken before the Committee. What his right hon. and learned Friend was now doing, was but an act of justice to the individuals who now sat upon the bench, and to the country itself. He had himself seen the Lord President of the Court of Session obliged to go to a court in a hackney coach. No large fortunes were made at the Scotch bar, and the only way in which the judges could provide for their families, was by insuring their own lives.

Mr. *Gillon* supported Mr. Wallace's motion. He observed, that the House had not too much popularity to lose, and he thought the passing of the present measure would by no means increase it. The judges were paid smaller salaries when they had less business before them, and living was more expensive. Notwithstanding the reductions for which credit had been taken in the abolition of other courts, the business before the Court of Session had continued to decrease. The average number of cases enrolled for the four years previous to the passing of the Judicature Act in 1825, was 2,143. By a return for the year 1833, the number was 2,031; and by a similar return for the past year, it was 1,486; thus exhibiting a diminution of about a third. Much had been said of the saving created by the reduction; but that saving was owing to retiring allowances, and other circumstances more prospective than immediate. It was notorious that the judges had but five months of session, while they had seven of vacation, and that even during session the judges of the inner house sat on an average only an hour and a-half per day. Previously to 1810, the salaries of the judges were 1,280*l.* per annum, and at that time they were raised on account of the high price of provisions and other necessaries. Circumstances had, since that time, been favourable to persons enjoying fixed incomes. That was the dearest period of the war. There had since been a reduction of rents, a fall in the price of provisions, and a spirit of economy introduced, which was to be extended to every class except the favoured Edinburgh lawyers. Much had been said of the propriety of giving such salaries as would tempt eminent lawyers to accept of seats on the bench. The practical working, even, of the present system had been, that the bench drained the bar of its talent.

The *Attorney-General* entirely agreed in the bill in all its parts. There was no necessity for any further inquiry whatever. Whether the bill was popular or unpopular he did not care, as it was but a bare act of justice to individuals and to the public.

The House divided on the motion that the Speaker do leave the Chair:—Ayes 56, Noes 11—Majority 45.

List of the Ayes.

Adam, Admiral
Attwood, W.
Baines, E.
Bannerman, A.
Baring, F. T.
Bernal, R.
Blair, J.
Briscoe, J. I.
Buller, E.
Campbell, Sir J.
Chalmers, P.
Clerk, Sir G.
Colquhoun, J. C.
Craig, W. G.
Dalmeny, Lord
Darby, G.
Donkin, Sir R. S.
Elliot, hon. J. E.
Ferguson, R.
Glynne, Sir S. R.
Godson, R.
Gordon, hon. Captain
Goulburn, rt. hon. H.
Grant, F. W.
Hawes, B.
Hayter, W. G.
Hepburn, Sir T. B.
Hobhouse, T. B.
Hodgson, R.
Hope, hon. C.
Hope, G. W.
Houstoun, G.
Inglis, Sir R. H.
Kinnaird, hon. A. F.
Lefevre, C. S.
Loch, J.
Lockhart, A. M.
Lushington, rt. hn. S.
Mackenzie, T.
Mackenzie, W. F.
Macleod, R.
M'Taggart, J.
Melgund, Lord
Murray, rt. hon. J. A.
Parker, J.
Parnel, rt. hn. Sir H.
Rae, rt hon. Sir W.
Rice, right hon. T. S.
Sinclair, Sir G.
Stuart, Lord J.
Strickland, Sir G.
Talfourd, Mr. Serjeant
Thomson, rt. hn. C. P.
Troubridge, Sir E. T.
Turner, W.
White, A.

TELLERS.

Maule, hon. F.
Steuart, R.

List of the Noes.

Brotherton, J.
Bruges, W. H.
Dundas, C. W. D.
Ellice, E.
Ellis, W.
Hastie, A.
Morris, D.
Murray, A.
Parker, R. T.
Salwey, Colonel
Vigors, N. A.

TELLERS.

Gillon, W. D.
Wallace, R.

The House in Committee.

On Clause 12, which had reference to the increase of the salaries of the judges, being put,

Mr. Gillon moved to insert the following words, “ And whereas the number of causes tried has of late years been materially diminished, and is now in progress of diminution."

The Committee divided:—Ayes 4; Noes 52—Majority 48.

List of the Ayes.

Dundas, C. W. D.
Morris, D.
Salwey, Colonel
Vigors, N. A.

TELLERS.

Gillon, Mr.
Wallace, Mr.

List of the Noes.

Adam, Admiral
Baring, F. T.
Baring, H. B.
Blair, J.
Broadly, H.
Brotherton, J.
Bruges, W. H. L.
Campbell, Sir J.
Chalmers, P.
Clerk, Sir G.
Colquhoun, J. C.
Craig, W. G.
Darby, G.
Easthope, J.
Elliot, hon. J. E.
Ellis, W.
Ferguson, R.
Finch, F.
French, F.
Godson, R.
Goulburn, rt. hon. H.
Hawes, B.
Hepburn, Sir T. B.
Hobhouse, T. B.
Hodgson, R.
Holmes, W.
Hope, hon. C.
Hope, H. T.
Hope, G. W.
Houstoun, G.
Hurt, F.
Inglis, Sir R. H.
Jones, J.
Kinnaird, hon. A. F.
Loch, J.
Lockhart, A. M.
Lushington, rt. hn. S.
Mackenzie, T.
Mackenzie, W. F.
M'Taggart, J.
Melgund, Lord
Moreton, hon. A. H.
Murray, A.
Murray, rt. hn. J. A.
Rae, rt. hon. Sir W.
Rice, right hon. T. S.
Sinclair, Sir G.
Stanley, E. J.
Stuart, Lord J.
Strickland, Sir G.
Thompson, rt. hn. C.P.
Wood G. W.

TELLERS.

Maule, hon. F.
Steuart, R.

On the question, in the same clause, for filling up the blank of the Lord President's salary at 4,800*l.*,

Mr. Gillon objected to the amount, and proposed 4,300*l.*

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* said, it had been his intention to propose a lower sum at first; but he thought it better to adopt a general principle, and he had been assured that there would be no objection to 3,000*l.* for the puisne judges. By analogy, the sum of 4,800*l.* would bear the same proportion to 3,000*l.* as existed between the puisne and chief judges in England.

Mr. *Wallace* said, the House had been led to expect that the puisne judges' salaries would be 2,600*l.* A proposition had been made to raise them to 3,000*l.*, provided certain reforms accompanied the rise; and he had agreed to it, on condition that there should be an inquiry into the question as to the number of judges required for Scotland. But the Government had made an advance on the terms they had themselves proposed, which were 2,600*l.* for the puisne judges, leaving the chief judges as they stood—namely, the Lord President 4,300*l.*, and the Lord Justice-Clerk, 4,000*l.*

Sir *W. Rae* defended the advance. Nothing now was left to excite the emulation of the Scottish bar but these two chief judgeships. He thought the Lord President should have 5,000*l.*

The Committee divided on the original motion:—Ayes 42; Noes 13—Majority 29.

List of the Ayes.

Adam, Admiral
Baring, F. T.
Baring, H. B.
Broadley, H.
Campbell, Sir J.
Clerk, Sir G.
Colquhoun, J. C.
Craig, W. G.
Darby, G.
Easthope, J.
Elliot, hon. J. E.
Ferguson, R.
French, F.
Godson, R.
Goulburn, rt. hon. H.
Hastie, A.
Hepburn, Sir T. B.
Hobhouse, T. B.
Hodgson, R.
Holmes, W.
Hope, hon. C.
Hope, H. T.
Hope, G. W.
Houstoun, G.
Hurt, F.
Inglis, Sir R. H.
Jones, J.
Kinnaird, hon. A. F.
Loch, J.
Lockhart, A. M.
Lushington, rt. hn. S.
Mackenzie, T.
Mackenzie, W. F.
Melgund, Lord
Moreton, hon. A. H.
Murray, rt. hon. J. A.
Rae, rt. hon. Sir W.
Rice, rt. hon. T. S.
Sinclair, Sir G.
Stanley, E. J.
Stuart, Lord J.
Thomson, rt. hn. C.P.

TELLERS.

Maule, hon. F.
Steuart, R.

List of the Noes.

Brotherton, J.
Bruges, W. H. L.
Chalmers, P.
Dundas, C. W. D.
Ellis, W.
Finch, F.
Hawes, B.
Morris, D.
Murray, A.
Salwey, Colonel
Strickland, Sir G.
Vigors, N. A.
Wood, G. W.

TELLERS.

Gillon, W. D.
Wallace, R.

On the 13th Clause being put,

Mr. *Gillon* proposed to insert a proviso in it, empowering the Crown to call on any judge who had retired upon a pension upon the ground of ill health, to resume his duties as soon as it appeared that he was in a condition to do so. The hon. Member mentioned the case of Sir Archibald Campbell as an instance of a judge, who after quitting the bench, had been quite restored to health, and was now as capable as ever he had been of exercising the judicial functions.

The Committee divided on the proviso:—Ayes 3; Noes 45—Majority 42.

List of the AYES.

Dundas, C. D. W.
Murray, A.
Vigors, N. A.

TELLERS.
Gillon, W. D.
Wallace, R.

List of the NOES.

Adam Admiral
Baring, F. T.
Baring, H. B.
Broadley, H.
Brotherton, J.
Bruges, W. H.
Chalmers, P.
Clerk, Sir G.
Craig, W. G.
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Hope, hon. C.
Hope, G. W.
Hurt, F.
Inglis, Sir R. H.
Jones, J.
Loch, J.
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Lushington, rt. hn. S.
Mackenzie, T.
Mackenzie, W. F.
Macleod, R.
Maule, hon. F.
Moreton, hon. A. H.
Morris, D.
Murray, rt. hn. J. A.
Rae, rt. hon. Sir W.
Rice, right hon. T. S.
Salwey, Colonel
Sinclair, Sir G.
Stanley, E. J.
Strickland, Sir G.
Thomson, rt. hn. C. P.
Wood, G. W.

TELLERS.
Elliot, hon. J. E.
Steuart, R.

Other Clauses agreed to, House resumed.

RAILROAD COMMUNICATIONS.] On the motion of Mr. Poulett Thomson, the Committee on Railways was nominated.

Mr. *Easthope* begged to observe that the public would feel much discontent that no statement had been made by the right hon. Gentleman of the objects of the committee, and that the country would view with anxiety and alarm the appointment of such a committee without a statement of its precise objects. He had informed the right hon. Gentleman in private, and he repeated it there, that he had hoped the defect of last night would have been remedied, and that he would have given that night the fullest information to the House.

Mr. *Poulett Thomson* said that it was not his fault that the hon. Gentleman was not satisfied with what he had stated to the House relative to the objects of this committee. The House had agreed to the appointment of the committee; and he must say that this course was not adopted by him from any choice of his own, but it had been pressed upon him; and as to the charge of an absence of statement, and of surprise, he could only add, that the hon. Gentleman differed from those hon. Members who did attend to what he last night said. He had, however, no objection to repeat what he had said. The object of the committee was to inquire into the regulations which might have been adopted under the bills which had been passed by Parliament, to see whether the powers which had been entrusted to the railroads by Parliament had been advantageously exercised, whether any amendment could be made, and, if so, whether an opportunity might not be taken of introducing into the bills, so many of which were now passing, such regulations as the Parliament should seem fit. He had stated that it was not his wish that the committee should not be considered as hostile to the railroads, but he thought that an inquiry might benefit equally the public and the parties concerned in the railroads themselves. These were the objects that he had in view in moving for the committee.

Mr. *Hawes* was very sorry to be obliged to trespass upon the attention of hon. Members; but his excuse was this, that had he understood that the subject was to have been brought on, upon the preceding night, he certainly should have felt it to be his duty to be in attendance. The subject having been brought on the night before, he believed, arose from a misunderstanding. He did not say with whom the misunderstanding had arisen. He took it that the misunderstanding was on his own part; but then he had to say, that but for the misunderstanding he should have been present and made some remarks upon the appointment of the committee. He decidedly objected to the appointment of any such committee; he objected to it upon principle. He thought that it was a most undue, improper, and wanton interference with capital. He had not yet heard a single public ground stated on which such a proposition could rest. What object could the right hon. the President of the Board of Trade mean by the appointment of such a committee? What information did he require of which he was not already in possession? Did he wish to know the regulations? Did he wish to understand the nature of these companies? Did he desire to know what powers the railways possessed? If this were all that was wanted in a committee, then the right hon. Gentleman had no necessity for a committee, for he had nothing to do but to ascertain it all by documentary evidence which was then in the possession of the House. And, then, as to the postponement of the railway bills, he must say that he did not see any necessity for pursuing any such course. There was nothing to prevent those bills going to a third reading, and if the House were disposed to have any clause subsequently introduced, it had full power to introduce such a clause. But he wanted to know what were the public grounds for this committee? What were the public grievances which compelled the appointment of any such committee. They saw the advantages of capital being embarked in these undertakings. They did not see any public evils which had arisen from them. He said this, as he had not any thing embarked in these railways—he had no interest in them beyond a mere trifle; and he believed that no one had embarked less in them than himself. This being his situation with respect to railways, he said, that unless some public evil arose out of these great undertakings, the House ought to be very cautious how, by any interference upon its part, it fettered the application of capital. It had not been shown that there had been, on the part of the railways, any interference with fair competion—no such thing had been shown or attempted to be shown on the part of the managers of the railways. What railway, he asked, had yet returned a remunerating profit for the capital embarked? He had heard, undoubtedly, of high premiums upon shares; but then he did not see actual profits divided. This, at least, was certain, that no profits had been made at the expense of the public. But then it might be asked had not the public gained considerable advantage by them? The companies' interest was bound up with that of the public. The interest of the public was theirs, and could not be separated. Another objection that he had to the appointment of the committee was that it interfered with the capital so embarked: but a more practical objection that he offered to the committee was, that no public ground had been laid for it, nor had he heard of any attempted to be laid by his right hon. Friend in the appointment of the committee. Had his right hon. Friend any plan to propose? Had he any principle to lay down? Had he any single defined object in view? Did he mean to say that he would limit profits? Did he mean to exercise a control over the carriages? or did he mean to interfere with the by-laws of the companies? These were matters which the public were entitled to know before Parliament tampered with a subject of such importance. Before any thing like this was done, the public had a right to know what was the object in view in appointing a committee.

The *Speaker* said the only question was, "that five be a quorum."

Motion agreed to.

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VOLUME XLVI.

BEING THE SECOND VOLUME OF SESSION 1839.

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